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Official Records

President: The Hon. Julian R. Hunte (Saint Lucia)

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda item 39 (continued)

New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

- (a) New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

Report of the Secretary-General (A/58/254)

Note by the Secretary-General on proposed revisions to programme 8 of the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005: United Nations support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (A/58/83)

Report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (A/58/16, chapter III, section B, programme 8; chapter IV, section B)

- (b) Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Report of the Secretary-General (A/58/352)

Mr. Bennouna (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): I would like to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on the subject of the New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and

international support. As you know, my group, the Group of 77, has supported from the beginning and still energetically supports the NEPAD initiative. This is because, first of all, the countries of NEPAD are members of our group and also because, for the first time, there is a coherent and completely integrated plan for the development of the entire African continent. I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the progress made in the implementation of this initiative and on the support given to it by the international community.

The Group of 77 and China is very pleased to see this debate covering the issues that relate primarily to Africa's development. NEPAD is a comprehensive programme for the socio-economic and political development of the continent, and that is why we should also deal with it in a comprehensive way. This programme is the departure point for the integrated development of the African continent.

But, of course, beyond the planning of the programme, there is the political will that each and every African country, all of us on the African continent, must have — the will to translate into reality the strategies that were adopted at a national level and that are taking place within the context of this integrated programme for the African continent. Therefore, each African Government will be called upon to mobilize all its national capacities for the realization of NEPAD objectives.

With the report of the Secretary-General, we have today an idea of all the measures taken by each African

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country and the institutional mechanisms set up at the regional level.

The establishment of what is now called the African Peer Review Mechanism — the mechanism for monitoring, assessment and reciprocal apprenticeship — constitutes a significant step made by our African countries for assessing the political and economic performances of the continent. That mechanism reflects the determination of all African countries to take charge of their own development. It will enable us to master the process of implementation and to achieve the objectives of NEPAD. As we have seen in the report, four countries will start these assessments by the end of this year.

Concurrently with the development efforts of the programme, good governance, as it is called today, should accompany the programme. Efforts have been made all over the continent to consolidate democracy and strengthen conflict prevention, settlement and management. Efforts have also been made to establish a pan-African parliament and to set up national focal points for NEPAD, and there are initiatives in each subregion of Africa to begin and encourage plans for infrastructures, health, education and agriculture — in other words, some of the most fundamental sectors.

We share the view of Kofi Annan that all this cannot be done without additional resources coming from outside the African continent. The mobilization of national resources by each country on the continent is not sufficient. That is why this debate today is so important, because it must inspire the international community to mobilize even more resources for NEPAD.

In 2002, a declaration was adopted by which the Member States committed themselves to provide the help and the support necessary for NEPAD, and we hope that that declaration will be followed up. The developed countries should help Africa to respect and implement the commitments that have been undertaken in various United Nations conferences and summits since the Millennium Declaration. Those commitments include, of course, official development assistance and the famous objective of 0.7 per cent of gross national product. Unfortunately, and we have to repeat this every time, there is the issue of external debt and, in an even more striking way today, in this world of globalization, the issue of opening up developed countries' markets to exports from poorer countries.

There is also the promotion of investment in developing countries, in particular in African countries.

There has certainly been some increase, which remains very limited, in official development assistance for Africa. We hope that this increase will be continued so that we can attain the objectives set for official development assistance, which rose with difficulty from \$16 billion in 2000 to \$18 billion in 2002. The Group of 77 and China would like to take this opportunity to encourage all donor countries to continue their efforts to provide official development assistance to the poorest countries in Africa — obviously, the least developed countries continue to need it most — in order to promote the development of those countries and implementation of NEPAD.

As far as external debt is concerned, measures have been undertaken with the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative. But we are still far from meeting the expectations of heavily indebted developing countries. That is why we hope that the announced contributions to the Fund created for the heavily indebted poor countries will be forthcoming. Furthermore, there is the impact of the international economic environment, of the policies of developed countries and of financial policies on a number of the reforms undertaken by developing countries to benefit from the Initiative.

Because of those difficulties, many countries have been slow to move from the point of decision to the point of completion. Likewise, some countries that have reached the point of completion have seen a deterioration in their indebtedness indicators because of the decrease in export income, which I just mentioned, and the volatility in commodity prices. That is why the Group of 77 and China has consistently linked international trade problems, debt problems and development financing problems.

Other indebted African countries have been neglected and continue to suffer from the burden of debt. They are obliged to allocate important resources to reimbursing that debt, often to the detriment of investment in the social sector. That is why it might seem abnormal that those countries are obliged to reimburse their debts to rich countries — for which such sums represent an extremely small proportion of their resources — to the detriment of social investment, which is absolutely necessary for their stability.

Therefore, during today's debate, we call on developed countries to redouble their efforts, in the

context of international solidarity, to invest financial resources in Africa, particularly because today's subject is NEPAD. Moreover, as I just said, developed countries must give up their protectionist trade policies to enable developing countries to gain access to the markets and consequently increase their own resources. The effects of such protectionist measures on the efforts and plans of developing countries — particularly African countries — can be devastating, as revealed during the recent conference held in Cancún.

Here, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I should also like to highlight the commitments undertaken since the Millennium Declaration during the international conferences held at Monterrey, Doha and Johannesburg. This year, in the context of the United Nations, we tried to ensure integrated follow-up and implementation of those conferences. We hope that that effort will be continued so that we can achieve the results envisaged for the 2005 summit.

In addition, I cannot fail to recall the failure of Cancún and the "cotton scandal", which showed to what an extent the positions of the richest countries may seem inconsistent with the multilateral trade system that they themselves have encouraged and supported. Indeed, at a time when rich countries are demanding increased and general trade liberalization of African countries — to the point of imposing it through multilateral institutions — those same countries show no sign of receptivity to the legitimate demands and urgent needs of African countries.

The role of the United Nations is certainly essential; it is important to mobilize international support for NEPAD. The creation of the Office of the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Africa — headed by my friend Ambassador Gambari — to which we contributed much last year in the framework of reform, is a source of satisfaction for us. We are also pleased to know that, in this year's budget, the necessary resources will finally be allocated to that Office, which will help to support NEPAD.

For the first time, we in the United Nations Secretariat we will have a focal point that will follow all African affairs on an equal basis. That being acknowledged, financial resources exist, and we fervently hope that they will help African countries and NEPAD.

Finally, I take this opportunity to recall that United Nations reports predict that certain of the world's regions will be in a position to attain the

Millennium Development Goals. The unfortunate exception is the African region, for the simple reason that current growth rates remain too weak to reduce poverty on the African continent. That is why, once again, the international community must meet the efforts of African countries halfway. Of course, more democracy and good governance are required of those countries.

The Group of 77 and China has often had the opportunity to say that security and peace are global concepts. They cannot be considered solely from the perspective of peacekeeping or of disarmament. Consequently, the struggle against poverty is an integral part of the action undertaken to safeguard international security. It is the preventive component of any action in favour of international peace and security.

In conclusion, Africa today has a mechanism at its disposal — an indigenous African initiative, NEPAD. It is up to us to support Africa's own efforts.

Mr. Jose (India): We would like to thank the Secretary-General for his first consolidated report on progress in the implementation of and international support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). We would also like to thank him for the report on the implementation of his recommendations on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. We have considered both reports with interest.

It has always been our conviction that Africa knows its own problems better than anybody. It also knows the solutions to the problems. We believe that Africa's understanding cannot be substituted by that of others. Its ownership and leadership of NEPAD is, for us, a *sine qua non* for the success of this framework.

Africa does, however, require support from outside for the solutions which it has identified. The international community promised this support, notably in the Declaration adopted at the Millennium Summit. It has also, in the United Nations and in other forums, endorsed NEPAD as the framework for an African-owned and African-led programme for the social and economic development of the continent.

It is still early to assess progress in the implementation of NEPAD. It is, nevertheless, important to bear in mind that a principal conclusion contained in the report of the Panel of Eminent Personalities on the Independent Evaluation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of

Africa was that commitments made by the international community largely remained unfulfilled during the 1990s. Official development assistance for Africa had been expected to increase at an annual rate of 4 per cent during that period. Instead, it fell by 46 per cent between 1990 and 2000.

NEPAD is based on the principles of responsibility, solidarity and partnership. This time, solidarity needs to be real. A further failure to show solidarity would harm the credibility of the international community and be injurious to the notion of partnership.

One of the first opportunities to demonstrate solidarity was provided by Cancún. The result was disappointing. There seems to be an incipient realization now that, tactically, the developed world should have offered more, and that it should have done so earlier. From a strategic point of view, however, it should have proceeded, *ab initio*, on the basis of a spirit of partnership.

There are some signs of progress, albeit modest, with regard to official development assistance for Africa. We note that the figure increased from \$16.4 billion in 2000 to \$17.7 billion in 2001 and \$18.6 billion in 2002. That trend needs to be built upon. It cannot, by itself, lead to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. A quantum increase is of primary importance as, given the situation with regard to trade and investment, there can be no substitute for official development assistance.

India's own relationship with Africa is built on strong historical and political foundations. We have been exploring ways in which we can provide support to NEPAD in the true spirit of South-South cooperation. Our Ministry of Commerce has launched a Focus Africa programme. This seeks to build on the growth of approximately 300 per cent which has been achieved in trade with sub-Saharan Africa in the past 10 years. We have also decided to increase the availability of credit for trade and other commercial exchanges. All bilateral debt with the countries covered by the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt (HIPC) Initiative has been cancelled. Africa is the principal focus of our technical and economic cooperation programme with developing countries. Our cooperation and solidarity with Africa is based on the firm belief that this partnership can be meaningful and mutually beneficial. While more remains to be accomplished, we are satisfied with the progress which is being made in

sharing with Africa our experience of economic and social development.

We endorse the recommendations made by the Secretary-General and would particularly like to highlight those which pertain to Africa's development partners. The resources which have been pledged need to be disbursed quickly and without conditionalities. Coherence and complementarity also need to be achieved in trade and aid policies.

Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine): First of all, the delegation of Ukraine would like to join others in thanking the Secretary-General for his reports submitted under agenda item 39. We commend the comprehensive and thorough analyses and action-oriented recommendations contained in those documents.

The beginning of the new millennium witnessed an unprecedented intensification of integration processes in Africa, marked by the creation of the African Union and the adoption of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as a strategic framework for the rebirth of the continent. Those historic events symbolized a new starting point for advancing the African renaissance on the basis of the principles of ownership, partnership, commitment and responsibility.

As was stressed by the African leaders themselves at the Maputo Summit, implementation is the key for the success of the New Partnership. In this regard, we underscore the particular importance of the early operationalization of the African Peer Review Mechanism, the innovative system of self-monitoring and self-control.

While it is the primary responsibility of the Africans themselves to translate their aspirations for revival into reality, the international community as a whole has an equal responsibility to assist Africa in that endeavour. The fact that the NEPAD agenda has been given a high priority in the work of the United Nations, the Group of Eight and other important international forums testifies to the determination of Africa's partners to shoulder this responsibility.

We believe that the United Nations has an important role to play in NEPAD by coordinating global advocacy in support of the New Partnership. That challenging mission necessitates strengthening collaboration, coordination and coherence among the various United Nations components. In this context, we take positive note of the establishment of the Office of

the Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Africa, which serves as a focal point for NEPAD in the United Nations system.

We believe that the success of NEPAD will depend to a large extent on proper dissemination of information and on the mass education of the African people as to its objectives. That is why, in our view, one of the priorities of the United Nations should be to popularize NEPAD and increase local awareness of the programme, or, in the words of the Secretary-General, to give visibility to NEPAD.

Ukraine, as a country which has a long history of friendly relations and partnership with Africa, pledges its continued support for sustainable development of the continent, first of all by deepening mutually beneficial cooperation with African States. We are closely following the process of NEPAD's implementation, and I would like to reaffirm our genuine interest in participating in bilateral and multilateral cooperation programmes for its specific sectoral priorities, such as the educational, agricultural and transport fields.

All of us present in this Hall are aware of the close interlinkage between the issues of development and of peace and security. It will not be possible to attain NEPAD's objectives and the Millennium Goals without settling unresolved conflicts in Africa and moving from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention.

Addressing in September 2000 the momentous Millennium Summit and the Security Council summit, the President of Ukraine, Leonid Kuchma, put forward an initiative to develop, within the framework of the United Nations, a comprehensive conflict-prevention strategy. That idea has gained even greater relevance since then.

The complex nature of conflicts in Africa should be addressed in a comprehensive and integrated manner, and, in this regard, I would like to make some key points.

First, equally responsible actions are required on the part of all relevant United Nations bodies, primarily the Security Council. That organ should, in our view, continue to be at the front line of international efforts to address the conflict situations in Africa.

Secondly, given the fact that the origins of outbreaks of violence often are of a social and economic nature, enhanced cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council is indispensable in addressing the root causes of hostilities.

Thirdly, the situation that prevails in Africa today highlights the importance of increased United Nations coordination and dialogue with regional and subregional organizations. Ukraine strongly advocates support on the part of the international community for the activity of the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Inter-Government Authority on Development (IGAD), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and other regional structures, which have conflict management and peacemaking as their central agenda. In that regard, we highly commend the assumption by the African countries of the primary responsibility for the stability of the continent.

Ukraine has always been committed to the objectives of peace and security in Africa and has been making a practical contribution to international peace efforts there. The participation of Ukrainian peacekeepers in the United Nations missions in Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Ethiopia-Eritrea testifies to that commitment. Moreover, I would like to use this opportunity to inform the Assembly of the arrangements being undertaken in Ukraine with respect to participation in the newly created United Nations Mission in Liberia.

As the Secretary-General rightly argues on page 1 of his report on NEPAD's implementation,

"Together, the principles of responsibility, solidarity and partnership are a formula for success".

In the context of the forthcoming visits of the President of Ukraine, Leonid Kuchma, to Africa this fall, I would like to reaffirm my country's readiness to continue to contribute to the promotion of international solidarity and partnership with the continent.

Mr. Sardenberg (Brazil): I would like at the outset to thank the Secretary-General for the first consolidated report on progress in implementation and international support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

I wish to associate myself with the statement made by Ambassador Bennouna on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

As the country outside Africa with the largest afro-descendent population in the world, and with strong historical and cultural ties to the continent, Brazil welcomed the New Partnership for Africa's Development. In our view, the ownership and

leadership of African countries regarding the definition of the priorities, strategies and actions foreseen therein, together with the principles of responsibility, solidarity and partnership, constitute the main merits of NEPAD and the right recipe for its success.

More than a decade ago, due to the magnitude of the problems affecting the continent, the international community identified Africa as its main target for cooperation. Conflicts, poverty, hunger, illiteracy, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria combined made prospects for development in Africa even bleaker than in other regions of the world.

Endeavours undertaken during the 1990s did not lead to the expected results. On the contrary, the number of poor people increased dramatically and many other problems were aggravated, including political instability and conflicts, which continued to hamper development efforts. Those problems were made even more serious by an unfavourable international environment in which protectionism prevailed and the price of commodities fell sharply, as did the flow of official development assistance and investments towards the African continent.

In response, African leaders decided collectively to take on the challenge of designing their own development strategy, based on a spirit of brotherhood and solidarity, which resulted in NEPAD. Last year, the General Assembly urged the international community and the United Nations system to organize their support for African countries around the principles, objectives and priorities of NEPAD.

As shown in the report of the Secretary-General, African countries have been doing their part. They have taken action in several areas, such as health, education, food security and infrastructure, and have also further developed important concepts and mechanisms foreseen in NEPAD, such as the identification of national focal points and the African Peer Review Mechanism.

Brazil welcomes the fact that the African leaders incorporated the Millennium Development Goals as a central part of NEPAD. The Secretary-General's report shows that, despite recent increases in official development assistance and progress in the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, international support to Africa has, so far, fallen short of what is needed. In order to halve the number of people living

in poverty by 2015, African countries will require an average annual economic growth of 7 per cent.

Coherence in the trade and aid policies of developing countries, along with disbursement of pledged resources and increased foreign investments, will be essential to support and supplement African endeavours towards realizing the Millennium Development Goals.

Due to its universality, neutrality and great experience, the United Nations family has a very important role to play in supporting NEPAD. As shown in the Secretary-General's report, the United Nations funds, programmes and agencies have been actively supporting African development efforts in many fields. For these actions to have greater impact, increased collaboration and coordination among the different United Nations institutions is very desirable.

The United Nations has also been playing a very positive role in countries emerging from conflicts. In that regard, we support the efforts of the Economic and Social Council in post-conflict situations and the contribution of the Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau, our sister country.

Brazil is determined to continue contributing to development efforts in Africa. Throughout the years, we have developed a special relation with the five African Portuguese-speaking countries through the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries, which we hope will continue to thrive. Our President will shortly visit five countries in Africa in order to pursue cooperation efforts.

Despite our limited resources, we have been involved in a series of initiatives which include debt cancellation or alleviation, technical cooperation and capacity-building. We are very willing to continue sharing experiences that have proved successful in Brazil in fighting poverty, hunger, illiteracy and HIV/AIDS, among other challenges.

We are convinced of the value of South-South cooperation, as a supplement to North-South cooperation. Similar realities and problems can clearly benefit from similar solutions. We invite developed countries and the United Nations system as a whole to enhance their support of this modality of cooperation, including through triangular arrangements, so as to ensure its sustainability and long-term positive results.

For NEPAD to harvest positive results and become the landmark that we all desire, international support and cooperation, in a true spirit of solidarity, are essential. The conditions exist and the time is ripe. Let us implement the actions and fulfil the commitments that were made. Africa cannot wait 10 more years.

Mr. Kim Sam-hoon (Republic of Korea): My delegation is pleased to note the firm commitment demonstrated by the African countries during the past year to integrate the priorities and the objectives of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) into their national policies and development planning frameworks. We are fully supportive of Africa's ownership and leadership of NEPAD. International solidarity and partnership, while necessary and important, can be effective only to the extent that the African countries take charge of their own development. In that regard, we encourage the African countries to continue to mobilize domestic support, as well as resources, for the implementation of NEPAD.

In order to ensure NEPAD's forward momentum, issues of political stability and good governance must be addressed. Conflict and civil strife continue to be the first and greatest roadblock to African development. We agree with the Secretary-General's assessment that security must be elevated to the highest priority in African affairs and that NEPAD economic programmes must be bolstered by strong institutions for conflict prevention and management. Thus, we welcome the initiatives of the African Union to strengthen regional mechanisms for conflict prevention and resolution. In particular, we commend the African Union's ongoing efforts to establish a Peace and Security Council under its authority. Moreover, we believe that the African Union's progress toward establishing a pan-African parliament represents an important step towards the development and the integration of the continent.

Good governance is the other key to the successful implementation of NEPAD. We commend the establishment of the NEPAD Peer Review Mechanism, to which 16 countries have already acceded. We believe that the Mechanism is a very good way to put mutual accountability to work for good economic and political governance. We encourage more countries to join in this important initiative. Moreover, we would like to see the international community provide technical support to the African countries to ensure that the Mechanism is fully functional as a vital aspect of NEPAD.

The international community must fulfil its commitment to NEPAD through continued and strengthened financial support and assistance in the area of capacity-building. In that regard, we welcome the recent increases in official development assistance to match the financial commitments of African countries to their national NEPAD programmes. Over the past 15 years, the Republic of Korea has contributed around \$2 billion of official development assistance to developing countries under the framework of South-South cooperation. Despite our current economic difficulties, we continue to increase our official development assistance on an annual basis.

Equally important, we believe, is assistance for human resources development and capacity-building. The international community should continue to share its experience and expertise with the African countries. This cooperation is particularly important in the field of information and communications technologies, which has become an indispensable means of harnessing the benefits of the globalizing world. With financing from the Republic of Korea Economic Commission for Africa Fund, my Government has undertaken projects that have included the establishment of an African information and telecommunications centre. We have also participated in human resources development projects, including the invitation of African ministers of education to the Republic of Korea for study tours.

Since 1992, we have invited some 1,200 foreign trainees in the information and communication technologies (ICT) field to participate in human resources development programmes in my country and have dispatched more than 500 Korean ICT experts and volunteers to implement programmes overseas. We have also sponsored an international conference on reviving private investment in Africa, as well as gender-based leadership development programmes.

Based on its own experience, the Republic of Korea cannot overstate the importance of trade to national development. Thus, we would like to see the international community make efforts to expand market access for African products. I am pleased to report that my Government has adopted a preferential scheme in which duty-free and quota-free market access is granted to a substantial number of products originating in least developed countries, the majority of which are in Africa. As a result, the Republic of Korea is now importing 4.8 per cent of all exports from least developed countries. According to recent World Trade

Organization (WTO) statistics, this makes us the world's fourth largest importer of those countries' products.

Moreover, the Republic of Korea continues to provide assistance to developing countries in capacity-building in the area of trade negotiations. My Government has invited 160 trade officials from developing countries for courses and seminars on international trade law and the details of the WTO agreement.

Another crucial issue for NEPAD's forward momentum is debt, which has sapped the energy of many developing countries. We would like to see significant efforts made to solve the debt problems of the heavily indebted poor countries in Africa. By exploring such options as debt restructuring and debt relief, we believe that a final resolution can be achieved that will contribute to the sustained economic growth of the such countries. For its part, the Republic of Korea has made a contribution this year of \$10 million to the Trust Fund for heavily indebted poor countries and encourages other countries to make efforts to fill the financial gap in the Trust Fund.

We applaud the steps taken by many United Nations agencies in support of NEPAD. Individually and in collaboration with one another, they are providing valuable assistance that is in tune with the needs of the various sectors of NEPAD. However, as the report of the Secretary-General (A/58/254) points out, there is room for greater coherence and coordination in their work. In this regard, we hope that the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa can play a greater role in enhancing the coherence, coordination and effectiveness of the United Nations in support of NEPAD.

In conclusion, the Republic of Korea would like to renew its commitment to assisting the African countries in their efforts for development. We remain confident that the resolute commitment and political will of the African countries, met by an effective response from the international community, will encourage further progress in the implementation of NEPAD.

Mr. Aye (Myanmar): My delegation would first like to express our appreciation for the consolidated report prepared by the Secretary-General (A/58/254) on the implementation of resolution 57/7 of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly, which entrusted the international community and the United Nations system with organizing support for African countries in accordance with the principles, objectives and priorities of the New Partnership for Africa's

Development (NEPAD). My delegation also commends the report presented by the Secretary-General (A/58/352) on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development. Both reports contain a comprehensive review of the progress made in the implementation of NEPAD and the establishment of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. The reports also identify the challenges and constraints encountered in implementation.

Africa has suffered through considerably difficult times, and it continues to encounter a complex array of problems, to the extent that we cannot expect their immediate resolution. Nevertheless, Africa's record of achievements thus far must also be acknowledged. The international community, for its part, needs to continue and increase the momentum of its assistance and demonstrate its solidarity with our African partners.

My delegation is heartened by two recent developments directed towards the realization of the NEPAD initiative. The first is the Maputo Declaration adopted at the second session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union held last July, which reiterated the political will and resolve of the African leaders to implement NEPAD as a holistic, comprehensive and integrated strategic framework developed by African leaders themselves as a home-grown initiative. The second development is the progress made in the implementation of an African Peer Review Mechanism, aimed at increasing the transparency and accountability of African Governments. Those two positive developments indicate that the NEPAD process has been moving forward to address the problems at hand.

Such commitments made by the African leaders, commendable as they are, will not be sufficient to overcome the many difficulties Africa is presently encountering. The majority of Africa's population lives on inadequate incomes. And more than 24 million are suffering the effects of HIV/AIDS; they can ill-afford the expensive but essential drugs available to treat them. The mortality rate among young children remains high and primary school enrolment is low. The recent economic climate in Africa is not very encouraging, as the year 2002 was characterized by a slowdown in economic growth, with only a modest recovery expected in 2003.

In the light of those developments, it is imperative that African countries redouble their efforts and demonstrate that Africa remains a viable development partner in the world. At the same time it necessarily follows that the international community must respond appropriately by assisting our African friends to help themselves.

In this context, it is of significance that the Government of Japan pledged \$1 billion in new aid for education and health care in Africa at the recent Tokyo International Conference on African Development. It is also a positive development to see a rebound in official development assistance to Africa, which has increased from \$17.7 billion in 2001 to around \$18.6 billion in 2002. The Group of Eight has also provided three quarters of official development assistance to Africa, and its members have committed themselves to participate in the Africa Action Plan to provide \$6 billion annually to African countries to spur growth and contribute to poverty alleviation.

But these developments, however encouraging, are still far from adequately addressing the many and varied needs of Africa. Developed countries need to make additional resources available towards achieving the target of 0.7 per cent of their gross domestic product as official development assistance to developing countries.

In the area of trade, improved market access for African exports is playing an essential role towards the attainment of sustainable economic growth. Some developed countries have begun to demonstrate flexibility on agricultural subsidies and other issues. The recent World Trade Organization agreement allowing countries with insufficient pharmaceutical manufacturing capacity to import inexpensive generic drugs also has been widely welcomed in developing countries, especially in Africa, where the incidence of HIV/AIDS is pervasive. Malaria and tuberculosis also pose a health threat and have a long-term negative impact on labour productivity. The failure at Cancun, however, has dampened hopes for further progress in those areas.

My delegation is of the view that South-South cooperation remains a key instrument to assist African development. The trend of increased economic and technical cooperation between Africa and other developing regions in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean is particularly welcome. The recently

concluded Asian-African Subregional Organizations Conference, held at Bandung, Indonesia, last July is an example of the revitalization of the spirit of the Afro-Asian movement and solidarity that began some 50 years ago.

My delegation welcomes the role that the United Nations is playing in the implementation of NEPAD by helping to structure activities in accordance with the priorities of the Agenda. The Secretary-General's efforts to establish the Office of the Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Africa are also noteworthy. We must also give due recognition to the productive role that the private sector and civil society can play to ensure the success of NEPAD.

Durable peace, security and sustainable development in Africa are intertwined and interrelated. In these circumstances, NEPAD remains the most viable approach to achieving sustainable African development as well as durable peace. It is essential that the international community remain engaged with the countries of Africa for the successful implementation of the home-grown process so wisely drawn up by the African leaders.

Mr. Samala (Nigeria): Let me state at the outset that Nigeria aligns itself with the statement made earlier by the Kingdom of Morocco and by Mozambique on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and of the African Union, respectively.

Nearly 12 months ago, the Assembly held a joint debate on the causes of conflict and the promotion of global peace and sustainable development on our continent. A few weeks earlier, the Assembly had also held a high-level dialogue on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The debate on NEPAD was a watershed event, and the one on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace once again shone a spotlight on the difficult road to peace and development on the African continent.

Since those two debates, conflicts in the African region have intensified rather than diminished. Guinea-Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, the Central African Republic, Sao Tome and Principe and the Democratic Republic of the Congo have gone through one crisis or another, to varying degrees. Guinea-Bissau and Liberia, more than any other, made dramatically clear the serious consequences of indecision and inaction by the international community.

Nigeria, along with members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), responded positively to the crisis in our subregion. In Liberia, an ECOWAS force was dispatched to stabilize the situation in that country. To further the process, Nigeria successfully negotiated an exit strategy that enabled former President Charles Taylor, the principal player in the Liberia conflict, to relinquish political power and go into exile.

It is important to note that, in the absence of peace in Liberia, it will be very difficult to achieve peace in neighbouring Sierra Leone, Guinea Conakry and Côte d'Ivoire.

As concerns Guinea-Bissau, I and five other ECOWAS Foreign Ministers led a mediation mission during which successful mediation efforts were deployed and a truce between the military and former President Kumba Yalá achieved. That paved the way for the establishment of a transitional Government under new leadership.

African countries have thus proved, in both words and deeds, their determination and their commitment to confront head-on the issue of conflict on the African continent. The establishment by the African Union of the Peace and Security Council and also of a peace and security corps will, hopefully, enable African Governments to mediate and possibly to resolve conflicts. However, the establishment of the Council should not be seen or used as an excuse for the international community to shrink from playing an active role in the search for peace on the African continent.

It will be necessary to develop and strengthen African capacity for conflict resolution. Furthermore, the international community, in particular the developed countries and the donor institutions, must endeavour to balance their support for peace and security measures with adequate support for socio-economic development in the African continent. This will have the effect of curbing conflict and providing a secure environment for durable development to take place on the continent.

The African Union will intensify its efforts for the early establishment of an African standby force, which will be capable of rapid deployment and intervention in areas of conflict on the continent. In this regard, Nigeria looks forward to support from the international community in order to realize this important goal of the African continent.

While we commend the United Nations system for its remarkable work in Sierra Leone, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Côte d'Ivoire, we cannot overlook its hesitant response to the crises in the Central African Republic, Guinea-Bissau and Liberia. The Security Council did not act decisively to contain those crises. Not surprisingly, the conflicts resulted in horrendous carnage, human rights abuses, deprivations, the displacement of persons and political instability in those three countries.

Nevertheless, Nigeria commends the Council for sending its team to West Africa to make an on-the-spot assessment of the security situation in the subregion. Similarly, Nigeria commends the Economic and Social Council for sending its Ad Hoc Advisory Group on African Countries Emerging from Conflict to Guinea Bissau last October. Indeed, the visit of the two teams had a calming effect on the conflicts in the West African region.

In our view, it is much cheaper to contain a conflict in its incipient stage than to reconstruct and rehabilitate after the destruction. Therefore, peacekeeping and peace-building measures must have an inbuilt early warning and response mechanism to avert the need for post-conflict developments. It would be better and more cost-effective to respond to the early warning signals before they escalated into full-blown conflicts. Therefore, the promotion of good governance, respect for human rights, the rule of law, accountability, transparency and the freedom to make choices are fundamental for nurturing a culture of peace and sustainable development in the African continent. In that regard, we commend the Secretary-General for his report (A/58/352), which addresses the questions of who is doing what, and to what effect in the African continent.

It is also appropriate at this stage to point out that the items on our agenda today concern implementation, not examination of causes and effects. However, it is important to reiterate that poverty, ignorance, illiteracy, unemployment, the ready availability of small arms and people's willingness to buy diamonds at cheaper prices outside the world market fuel conflicts in the African continent.

Furthermore, the international community's inaction and non-implementation of its commitments also have a direct bearing on the conflicts in our continent. However, it is gratifying to note that several

United Nations agencies, in particular the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) and the recently created Office of the Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Africa, to mention a few of those actively involved in the promotion of peace in some of the complex situations in the African continent, as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General.

However, durable peace and sustainable development need an environment that promotes transparency, accountability, economic growth, social harmony, participation, inclusiveness and, to a greater extent, freedom. The capacity of African Governments to provide those elements and all the social services is very weak today, as the Secretary-General reminded us in his report.

It is in this millennium that the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is expected to operate. The objective of the NEPAD initiative is to lift Africa to a higher plane, anchored on the assumption of a robust economy, functional institutions and structures and a sustainable environment.

But, by most accounts, the prospects for economic recovery in the African continent still look bleak. In 2002, five African countries experienced a negative economic growth rate. That trend does not augur well for durable peace and development in the African continent. On the contrary, as the Secretary-General has pointed out, the challenges of poverty reduction in Africa are enormous. Nigeria agrees with the Secretary-General's assessment that while economic and political reforms, including good governance, sound social and economic policies, domestic resource mobilization and allocation are important for poverty reduction, they are not sufficient for achieving sustainable development.

Despite their daunting tasks, African Governments have made progress in the implementation of NEPAD. Nigeria and several other countries have established national focal points, and we are on course in integrating NEPAD priorities into our national development plans. These countries are to be commended for their efforts, and urge all those that

have yet to do so, including the international community, to take the necessary steps to integrate the NEPAD priorities into their programmes and projects in support of the NEPAD initiatives.

The establishment of the Panel of Eminent Persons to oversee the African Peer Review Mechanism is a step in the right direction. Nigeria and 15 other African countries have voluntarily subscribed to the Mechanism and have agreed to present themselves for peer review on good governance and accountability in the next three months. It is our hope that the results of the Peer Review will end any lingering doubts about the irreversible commitment of African Governments to the implementation of NEPAD.

Nigeria welcomes the practical steps taken by the G-8 countries and the United Nations in support of the implementation of NEPAD. In particular, Nigeria appreciates the G-8's African Action Plan announced at the Kananaskis Summit and reiterated at the Evian Summit in 2003. Nigeria also welcomes the establishment of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, which my dear brother, Mr. Ibrahim Agboola Gambari, is heading as Under-Secretary-General, and urges that the Office be adequately funded.

While applauding these practical measures, Nigeria hopes that African countries will accelerate their mobilization of domestic resources and internal savings while our development partners undertake to commit more resources beyond the \$13 billion so far committed for the implementation of NEPAD's priorities and programmes.

It is a matter of regret that many NEPAD projects remain on the drawing board today because Africa lacks the requisite resources to implement them. To make resources available, developed countries must urgently address the protracted questions of trade, market access, agricultural subsidies, official development assistance, foreign direct investment, high levels of external debt and the flight of capital. Since trade is an engine for development and economic growth, developed countries must make the necessary concessions at the resumed talks of the World Trade Organization in December this year and respond more positively to Africa's urgent call for a fair, equitable and rule-based international trade and financial system.

Africa is also constrained by the scourge of HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other deadly diseases. The socio-economic losses caused by their

prevalence are incalculable. Unless those diseases are contained, Africa will lose not only its productive work force, but also several generations of its population.

The greatest challenge in Africa is to overcome the high incidence of conflict in order to make it possible for the continent to move forward with its development goals and programmes. Complementary partnerships between African Governments and the African people and between Africa and the international community will be required to ensure lasting peace, stability and sustainable development.

A new enterprise for Africa's development cannot thrive in an atmosphere of conflict. Nor will it be effective without international cooperation.

In conclusion, therefore, Nigeria fully welcomes and appreciates the efforts of the international community to ensure that Africa's determination to lay a solid foundation for integrated sustainable economic development becomes a reality. We believe, however, that if those efforts are to bear fruit and if we are to avoid the pitfalls of past initiatives, there must be full implementation and fulfilment of all commitments made by the international community during the Millennium Summit, the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Implementation must take place in an integrated and coordinated manner, so as to ensure synergy and the effectiveness of these processes. That is the only way to ensure Africa's permanent and sustainable development and to enable the continent to claim the twenty-first century as Africa's century.

Mr. Sermoneta (Israel): I would like at the outset to note with satisfaction the fact that this year the Assembly is considering both the issue of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the causes of conflict in Africa in a joint debate. In our opinion, this not only accurately reflects the close link between peace and development, but also contributes to the focalization of the work of the Organization, a principle that we strongly support.

Israel welcomes the first consolidated report on progress in the implementation of and international support for NEPAD (A/58/254). The report outlines in a comprehensive fashion progress stemming from actions taken by African countries, as well as the responses of the international community and the United Nations system, while at the same time offering

a coherent analysis of the challenges and constraints faced at each level.

As in the past, Israel wishes to reiterate its strong support for the initiatives and principles adopted by the African Union in its efforts to achieve its developmental goals. This African-Union-led, -owned and -managed initiative, and the important elements that it includes, constitute an outstanding example of how ownership and regional cooperation can be harnessed to pursue development and address challenges. By striking an appropriate balance among the principles of responsibility, solidarity and partnership, NEPAD could potentially improve the chances for progress and prosperity in that troubled continent.

In this context, we commend the accession of 16 African countries to the African Peer Review Mechanism. As that Mechanism reflects a genuine desire on the part of African nations to make good on the promises of NEPAD — good governance, democracy, peace and security, human rights and sound economic management — we would like to encourage other countries to join the Mechanism soon.

We note with appreciation the creation of national focal points for NEPAD in several African countries, the completion of the NEPAD health programme and the recent endorsement in Maputo of the environmental programme. At the same time, and given the importance of education as a primary and critical component in any development strategy, we would like to take this opportunity to express hope for the speedy implementation of the educational programme of NEPAD.

Israel welcomes the commitment of the United Nations in strengthening collaboration and coordination among its components in order to provide the necessary support for the effective implementation of NEPAD, and endorses the recommendations specified in the report.

Israel has always considered its relations with Africa to be of the highest priority. From the late 1950s, while still a developing country itself, Israel sought to build development partnerships with the newly independent States of sub-Saharan Africa. In line with this long record of cooperative work throughout Africa, and the continuing tradition of friendship and solidarity, Israel is offering its experience and expertise to help NEPAD succeed and the African continent flourish by sharing our know-how in areas such as food security, the empowerment

of women, education and health, both bilaterally and with the participation of United Nations development funds and programmes.

In addition to our bilateral aid and training programmes, Israel also actively supports international initiatives such as the World Bank's International Development Association programmes and the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt (HIPC) Initiative for debt reduction. Israel has already forgiven the debt of a number of African countries, and will continue to consider additional debt relief to other States, to the extent that our limited resources allow.

Although our assistance may appear rather modest to some, one must remember that as a nation of barely 6 million citizens carrying a heavy financial burden arising from the need to defend their existence, Israel's per capita contribution to Africa's future is among the most significant in the world. Based on a friendship that has endured over time, we are committed to working together with African countries to build on the momentum of NEPAD and to reach its promised outcome. We are doing so because we are convinced that the hardships of Africa are not a burden, but a shared responsibility. We are doing so because we believe in the potential of Africa and its people.

Ms. Motjope (Lesotho): I am delivering this statement on behalf of the Permanent Representative of Lesotho, Ambassador Moleko.

I wish to join other delegations in extending my warm congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your election, as well as to the other members of the Bureau. I am confident that, under your able leadership, our deliberations will be crowned with success. Lesotho associates itself with the statement made by the Kingdom of Morocco on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

A year ago, on 16 September 2002, the United Nations General Assembly convened a high-level plenary meeting to consider how to support the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Through its resolutions 57/2 of 16 September 2002 and 57/7 of 4 November 2002, the General Assembly decided to bring to a close the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and to endorse NEPAD as the framework within which the international community, including the United Nations system, should concentrate its efforts for Africa's development.

NEPAD is viewed as an expression of Africa's determination to assume strong leadership for poverty eradication and sustainable development. In this regard, it is important to note that the priorities of NEPAD are closely linked with those of the Millennium Development Goals. NEPAD therefore deserves the full support of the international community, including the United Nations system, as it is an important element in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in Africa.

My delegation welcomes the two comprehensive reports of the Secretary-General entitled "The New Partnership for Africa's Development: first consolidated report on progress in implementation and international support" (A/58/254) and "Implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa" (A/58/352). The report on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) recognizes the good will of African countries, through various measures that they have taken, to ensure that NEPAD becomes the framework for international cooperation between Africa and the international community. Let me also take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to the Secretary-General for establishing the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa. We call for adequate funding for that Office to enable it to fulfil its mandate.

In Africa, efforts to achieve sustainable development continue to be undermined by a variety of factors, including conflicts, humanitarian crises, natural disasters and diseases including HIV/AIDS. For the international community to successfully address those factors, serious attention must be paid to fulfilling the commitments made at all major United Nations conferences and summits and to focusing greater attention on the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. My delegation welcomes the international community's continued commitment and supportive role with regard to NEPAD and the role of the United Nations in coordinating activities related to ensuring its success at the regional and subregional levels.

Economic growth and political development in Africa are threatened by the prevalence of conflicts. Some of those conflicts are interminable, while others are spontaneous yet equally destabilizing. As a result, they pose serious challenges to development efforts in

Africa. Without peace and security, long-term development and poverty eradication are only utopian ideals. NEPAD recognizes that the primary responsibility for Africa's future and development rests with Africans themselves, but Africa needs support from its development partners.

While African leaders have shown their firm commitment to assuming responsibility for peace and security on their continent, what has been lacking is a rapid response to conflict situations such as those we have witnessed in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau and elsewhere. Experience has shown that, where the international community responds promptly, the results are clear, but that, where there is hesitancy, we have carnage and mindless destruction. African Governments are determined to promote peace and security on the continent through democracy, good governance, respect for human rights and the rule of law, sound economic management, and involvement by civil society in the decision-making processes through consultations. The appointment of a panel of eminent persons to oversee the African Peer Review Mechanism is a commendable development and a concrete indication that Africans are serious about charting a new course for themselves.

My delegation welcomes the Africa Action Plan adopted by the Group of Eight (G-8) world economic Summit held in Canada in June 2002. The Action Plan is undoubtedly a valuable and vital framework for a new partnership between Africa and the G-8. We also welcome the commitment to implement the Action Plan made at the G-8 Summit held in Evian, France, in June 2003. In addition, let me take this opportunity to welcome the progress made through the Tokyo International Conference on African Development, Japan's initiative aimed at implementation of NEPAD.

Lesotho is committed to the implementation of NEPAD. Like many other African countries, Lesotho is committed to peace and security, democracy, good governance and respect for human rights. We have made progress towards political tolerance and inclusiveness. However, Lesotho still faces the challenge of ensuring that peace and stability are entrenched and that democracy as a way of life is deepened throughout society. To that end, the Government of Lesotho is working on strengthening institutional structures that will ensure good governance as well as accountability in the public service and private sectors and transparency throughout Government at the central and local levels. Lesotho is

currently investing heavily in stamping out corruption within the public sector.

The African vision is clear. What remains to be done is implementation, and if NEPAD is to avoid going the way of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, both Africa and its development partners must fulfil their commitments. Africans have demonstrated leadership and ownership of the initiative, and it is expected that the international community will continue to extend the requisite support to NEPAD.

Mr. Dube (Botswana): First of all, I should like to thank the Secretary-General for his two reports, on progress made in implementation of the programme of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (A/58/254) and on implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/58/352).

Through its resolutions 57/2 and 57/7, adopted in September and November 2002 respectively, the General Assembly welcomed NEPAD as a programme of the African Union that embodies the vision and commitment of all African Governments and peoples for peace and development. Furthermore, in its resolution 57/300 of December 2002, the General Assembly adopted the NEPAD programme as a framework for United Nations support for Africa and mandated the creation of an Office at United Nations Headquarters led by an Under-Secretary-General and dedicated to supporting African development in general and NEPAD in particular. The functions of that new Office were identified as advocacy, reporting, coordination and servicing of the intergovernmental bodies at United Nations Headquarters.

It is therefore timely and appropriate that the General Assembly is meeting today to consider the first consolidated report by the Secretary-General on progress in implementation of the NEPAD programme. Botswana is a member of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee, and we have remained committed to supporting and ensuring full implementation of NEPAD priorities and programmes.

In its resolution 57/7, the General Assembly welcomed the commitment of African countries to integrate the priorities of NEPAD into their national policies and development planning frameworks, to

maintain full ownership and leadership in developing and utilizing such policies and frameworks, and to mobilize domestic resources in support of NEPAD. The resolution also welcomed the commitment of African countries themselves to peace, security, democracy, good governance, human rights and sound economic management.

The Secretary-General's report highlights the actions taken in the support and implementation of NEPAD programmes, as well as the challenges and constraints ahead. The report also indicates that a number of positive steps are being taken by African countries towards attaining these goals. The report notes, however, that African countries and their regional organizations should now incorporate into their development plans the NEPAD priorities and programmes, including the identification and creation of national focal points, the reorientation of the activities of regional organs to reflect those of NEPAD, the implementation of NEPAD health programmes at national and regional levels and, finally, the completion of a comprehensive plan for African development and programmes in education, the environment and infrastructure development.

It must be pointed out, however, that the report contains few concrete examples of programmes that are now under implementation in our respective countries. Africa cannot survive on ideals and platitudes alone. It is clear that African Governments themselves still have a lot to do before they can implement NEPAD at the national and regional levels. Of course, we are still in the early stages of this, as the programme itself is still new.

Africa's development partners, on the other hand, have responded positively to NEPAD. The report indicates, for example, that over the past two years official development assistance to Africa rose from \$17.729 billion to \$18.615 billion. We believe that this is mainly because the NEPAD initiative, which has been formulated and developed by Africans themselves, has generated strong interest and excitement among our partners.

The goals and priorities of NEPAD do not differ from the Millennium Development Goals, especially in that NEPAD has identified the following areas as critical: the pursuit of peace and security and the related issues of poverty reduction and good governance; agriculture and food security; diversification and competitiveness of Africa's output and exports, and

related issues of market access; and infrastructure development.

However, with Africa's performance appearing so bleak on some fronts — in regard particularly to growth, trade, foreign direct investment and poverty — some pessimists have wondered whether it is realistic to expect our continent to meet the Millennium Development Goals and other ambitious targets. They note, for example, that, despite many international and regional initiatives — including NEPAD — by 2015, poverty in Africa will have increased and that HIV/AIDS prevalence rates will also have risen. Furthermore, they cite studies on African economies that also indicate that the HIV/AIDS pandemic will reduce the gross domestic product growth rate by between 0.4 per cent and 1.5 per cent during the same period. To make matters worse, debt relief in Africa is still inadequate. This is further compounded by the high domestic burden, high interest rates and little or no new private sector investment.

We, however, still believe that Africa is a continent filled with dynamism and potential. What we need now is to concentrate on the twin challenges of development and poverty eradication, which is what NEPAD is trying to do. These can only be achieved through a concerted global effort. There needs to be a greater push to make NEPAD the overarching framework for public policy, and to ensure that NEPAD's priorities are better understood by civil society in Africa. Ownership of NEPAD must relate to the needs of the ordinary people of Africa and not just to Governments.

We note that the review of implementation of the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report regarding the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace in Africa indicates that there has been progress, although it has been slow and uneven. We should bear in mind that there is a clearly established link between poverty on the one hand and political instability on the other. Poverty breeds resentment, anger and despair, and Africa is plagued by all three of these.

Like any other people condemned to the margins of society, the majority of Africans feel that they have nothing to gain by participating in the democratic process. Instead, some believe that they have nothing to lose if they resort to violence, for, as they perceive it, their Governments and the international community are indifferent to their suffering.

Our failure to resolve conflicts in Africa poses a major threat to NEPAD. It is incumbent, therefore, upon all of us to redouble our efforts in conflict resolution and post-conflict management.

In conclusion, let me express our deep appreciation for the efforts made by the Group of Eight (G-8) leaders for their continued constructive engagement with African leaders in the NEPAD agenda and their adoption of the G-8 Africa Action Plan. I would also like to implore the rest of the international community to continue to follow their example in making concrete commitments of support for the revitalization of the African continent.

We put our trust in the United Nations as the focal point for the promotion and coordination of international efforts in the support of Africa's development strategy.

Mr. Butagira (Uganda): I would like to congratulate the Secretary-General on his excellent report on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (A/58/254). I associate myself with the statement of the Kingdom of Morocco on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and with that of Mozambique on behalf of the African Union on NEPAD.

The New Partnership for Africa's Development, as a home-grown and -owned blueprint for Africa's development, has put Africa's economic and social development programmes at the heart of the international development agenda. Besides these issues of economic development, African countries are also emphasizing good governance, including corporate governance, the rule of law and democracy and putting in place a self-policing mechanism known as the African Peer Review Mechanism. Rather than being prodded by developed countries towards those good values, African countries have taken the bull by the horns and have declared to the whole world that they too are capable of appreciating good values, just as everybody else does, and that they are prepared to bring errant members to book through persuasion and dialogue. What they need from the developed world are resources to implement these programmes designed by themselves; hence their partnership with the developed world.

I will comment on a few areas on which I think we should focus to make this initiative more effective.

Mr. Ekua Avomo (Equatorial Guinea), Vice-President, took the Chair.

First, with regard to the African Peer Review Mechanism, it is not encouraging to learn that only 16 countries have acceded to the protocol. More work is needed — through concerted effort by the African Union secretariat, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa here at the United Nations Headquarters — by way of impressing it upon those countries that have not acceded to the Mechanism to do so.

Peace and security on the continent are necessary to provide a conducive atmosphere for economic development, including foreign investment. In that regard, the establishment of the Peace and Security Council by the African Union is a welcome measure. So far, 12 countries have ratified the Protocol, out of the 15 needed to make the Council operational. That is encouraging, and it is hoped that the necessary ratifications will be obtained soon.

In the Great Lakes region, thanks to the assistance and cooperation of the United Nations and the international community, we have seen regional efforts bear some fruit with regard to resolving the conflict in Burundi. Uganda commends the initiative of the Secretary-General, who convened a high-level meeting that adopted the Principles on Good-Neighbourly Relations and Cooperation between the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda.

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development has been instrumental in finding durable peace in Sudan and Somalia.

Many players — including intergovernmental organizations, the private sector, the United Nations system and Governments — have come forward to assist African countries in implementing NEPAD. Besides increased financial resources, more coordination and consultation is needed to mainstream NEPAD into various programmes of those organizations and bodies. To that end, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa must be strengthened by increasing the financial and human resources at its disposal. For example, the Office should be able to organize seminars and workshops in various parts of the continent to popularize NEPAD.

Skilled personnel and resources are needed at the secretariats of the ECA and NEPAD, as well as at the subregional and country levels, to help put in place development plans for various areas covered by

NEPAD. In that regard, I commend the United Nations Development Programme, which has made funds available to NEPAD to develop its five-year strategic plan. I also commend the United Nations Environment Programme, which has helped to develop an environmental plan for NEPAD.

Institutional mechanisms need to be put in place to ensure the success of NEPAD. In my own country, Uganda, efforts are under way to establish a NEPAD focal point. A Cabinet decision ruled that the national NEPAD secretariat would be hosted in the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. A steering committee, made up of that Ministry, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, a private sector foundation, civil society, the Prime Minister's office, the President's office and representatives of academia, was also established to oversee NEPAD's activities.

The national task force on NEPAD has been studying coordination models in other African countries from which best-practice recommendations for the institutional mechanism for NEPAD's implementation in Uganda can be made. To retain African ownership and leadership of NEPAD, the Government is expected to fund the activities of the NEPAD national focal point from the national budget. However, due to budgetary constraints, we need assistance to secure funds to get the national NEPAD coordinating structures started, as well as to design and implement an initial outreach programme.

Apart from developing a strategy to coordinate and oversee the implementation of Cabinet-approved policies, programmes and projects at the national level, the focal point is mandated to develop a communication strategy to effectively mobilize the private sector, local governments, traditional leaders and civil society, including women's organizations, in support of NEPAD.

Africa needs to invest more in human resources development if it is to realize its NEPAD goals. In that regard, education is a key. Sadly, not much has been achieved in this area, although some countries have made impressive progress. In Uganda, for example, we achieved the goal of universal primary education. In 1996 enrolment in primary schools stood at 2.5 million pupils. Today it is 7.8 million. The number of universities has risen from one in 1986 to 16 today; and only 5 are Government-funded, pointing to the role played by the private sector. It goes without saying that

an educated populace is good for governance, and good for industrialization by providing skilled manpower.

Health and the provision of safe drinking water and sanitation are vital. Preventive measures like immunization and hygiene need to be stepped up. In Africa water-borne diseases are a menace. Improved sanitation and the provision of safe drinking water should therefore be a priority. In Uganda now, 55 per cent and 65 per cent of rural and urban populations, respectively, have clean water.

Finally, at the Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development, the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Kananaskis G-8 Summit, the third Tokyo International Conference on African Development and various other conferences and summits, developed countries pledged themselves to assist Africa financially in its development goals at both the bilateral and multilateral levels. As Africans fulfil part of their bargain, we look forward to developed countries fulfilling their part, especially by increasing the flow of official development assistance, the target of which — 0.7 per cent of gross domestic product — is still an unrealized dream.

Mr. Mahiga (United Republic of Tanzania): It is with great pleasure that I take the floor on behalf of my delegation to speak on the agenda item entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support". That item became part of the annual agenda of the General Assembly in accordance with resolution 57/7, of 4 November 2002. Concurrently, we are also debating today the sub-item entitled "Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa", as per resolution 57/296, of December 2002.

Allow me, at the outset, to acknowledge the comprehensive reports of the Secretary-General, namely, the first consolidated report on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (A/58/254) and the updated report on conflicts (A/58/352). The quality of both reports is outstanding. We owe special thanks to the Office of the Special Advisor on Africa and to the Secretary General for preparing those reports.

Let me also take this opportunity to commend the United Nations system as a whole for its positive response in the implementation of NEPAD-related activities in individual African countries, as well as in

regional groups and throughout the world. The cluster approach is an imaginative intervention in achieving coherence and coordination among United Nations entities. In this regard, we further commend the global advocacy and coordination efforts in support of NEPAD undertaken by the Special Adviser on Africa through the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, which periodically reviews and assesses the progress and work of United Nations entities in Africa to advance NEPAD's objectives and goals. We trust that these approaches and roles will be strengthened and remain adequately responsive to emerging challenges as NEPAD implementation continues.

NEPAD is a homegrown African initiative and a collective commitment to put Africa on a new path of development. NEPAD has recognized the systematic fetters and constraints which have left Africa on the margins of the global economy and social progress. The African continent is the least developed continent in the world. Not only that, it is the only continent where poverty is on the increase with more than 340 million people, or half the population, living on less than \$1 a day. In Africa there are 34 of the world's 54 least developed countries.

NEPAD intends to reverse this situation. It is a framework for a new partnership with the international community designed to address the current challenges facing the African continent: issues such as escalating poverty levels, underdevelopment, the HIV/AIDS pandemic and other communicable diseases. In essence, NEPAD is a commitment to the Millennium Development Goals, notably the goal of reducing by half the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by the year 2015.

To achieve these Goals, NEPAD calls for attaining and sustaining an average growth of real gross domestic product of 7 per cent per year up to the year 2015. In order to attain that goal, NEPAD calls for a partnership of Governments, the private sector, civil society and development partners in the international community.

In order to translate its vision into tangible results, NEPAD has developed an initial plan which centres on the following priorities: first, to establish the conditions for sustainable development by addressing issues of peace and security, democracy, good governance, respect of human rights, as well as regional cooperation and capacity building; secondly, to address sectoral priorities in areas such as

agriculture, infrastructure, human development and energy and thirdly, to mobilize resources by increasing domestic savings and investments, improving management of public revenue and expenditure and improving Africa's share in global trade and foreign direct investment.

NEPAD has been approved as the vision, strategic framework and socio-economic development programme of the African Union. It is the blueprint of the African Union to implement its objectives and a mechanism for accelerating implementation of the Abuja Treaty, as outlined in the Constitutive Act of the African Union. NEPAD will be fully integrated into the African Union over a three-year period.

The African Union is working to put in place programmes and institutions which will assist in the implementation of NEPAD. It is also acknowledged by the African Union that genuine development and poverty reduction is only possible in an environment of true democracy, respect for human rights and peace and good governance at the national, regional and global levels. Long-term conditions for ensuring peace and security require policy measures to address the political and social vulnerabilities on which conflict and corruptive practices thrive in Africa.

My country is among the founding member States of the African Union, which has embraced NEPAD as one of its economic pillars. We totally support the principles and objectives of NEPAD, which are also in line with my Government's Economic Vision 2025, as well as the Poverty Reduction Strategy policy. I am delighted to say that NEPAD has been well received at the national level, including by relevant institutions in the public and private sectors. Efforts are also continuing to educate the general public to understand, cooperate and participate in the implementation of NEPAD initiatives.

The private sector is recognized as pivotal in the implementation of NEPAD. Tanzania has successfully completed a number of reforms that are conducive to fostering private sector development. Such reforms have included opening up financial sector participation, proactive encouragement of foreign investment through appropriate incentive packages and rationalization of the tax policy. Other reforms include establishment of commercial courts to deal with commercial disputes, improvement of business licensing procedures, liberalization of the domestic trade regime, which has

enhanced competition and productivity, as well as liberalization of the foreign exchange market.

Tanzania has also prepared write-ups of various projects in all sectors covered under NEPAD and already has submitted them to the East African Community and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) for funding. The Eastern African subregion is scheduled to meet at the summit level on 29 October 2003 in Nairobi, to rationalize these projects and see how best to cooperate and operationalize these projects. The major focus is expected to be on infrastructure development in the region.

At the August Summit of Heads of State and Government of the SADC countries in Dar es Salaam this year, the Summit's final communiqué urged member States to integrate NEPAD agreed priorities into their national development plans and to increase resource allocation to these priority areas. It is in this regard that we call upon our partners to come forward and assist in these initiatives. The Summit also mandated the Ministers of Trade, as a matter of urgency, to prepare negotiating guidelines and to initiate negotiations with the European Union on economic partnership agreements.

It should further be pointed out that NEPAD has also come up with what is described as a most innovative programme — the African Peer Review Mechanism. This is a systematic assessment of the performance of a country by member States whose ultimate objective is to help a country undergoing review improve its policy, adopt appropriate practices and comply with established standards, principles, codes and best practices consistent with political economic and corporate good governance. Peer review also helps in confidence-building among States and permits predictability with regard to policies and strategies in a given country or region. Tanzania totally subscribes to this mechanism.

We are pleased to see that NEPAD has received international acceptance as a framework for engagement with Africa on development. Significant interactions have been undertaken with the G-8, the European Union, various agencies of the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions, and non-G-8 development partners, such as the Nordic States, India and China, as well as the Commonwealth, and the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) process.

In these areas of cooperation with our partners, Tanzania, as one of the participants in the search for solutions to conflicts and for peace and security in the Great Lakes region of Africa, welcomes the assistance given by the G-8 countries, the European Union and, the United Nations, as well as bilateral assistance, to enable deployment of peace observers, monitors and peacekeeping troops in the region. For all of us involved, it should be pointed out that early and timely deployment is a tremendous issue of essence in realizing peace in conflict situations.

In conclusion, we urge greater coordination and harmonization of interventions with our partners. We are deeply aware of the need to streamline the coordination channels between NEPAD's Steering Committee and Implementation Committee with the national focal points to expedite the communication of decisions and follow-ups in both directions. We are all set on the right course; this initial review is encouraging. We have but to sustain the momentum of NEPAD's implementation with the requisite resources. We cannot afford to regress.

Mr. Amer (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): In 1998 the Secretary-General submitted a report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. A little over a year ago, the first summit meeting of the African Union adopted a document on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), in which the heads of State of Africa committed themselves to carry out a common vision, convinced as they were that an end had to be put to hunger, poverty, underdevelopment and marginalization, and to enable their countries to follow the path of sustainable development by allowing them to participate in an effective manner in the global economy.

We are now reviewing the progress achieved regarding the implementation of the New Partnership as regards conflicts in Africa. I should like to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General for the two reports he has prepared on these issues. They make clear what has been achieved during the past year as well as the obstacles that remain to be overcome.

The reports are contained in documents A/58/254 and A/58/352. They make clear the progress that has been achieved in putting an end to conflicts and achieving the priority goals of NEPAD. We welcome the fact that African countries have taken numerous

innovative measures, despite the fact that many of them have been ravaged by civil wars for so long. They have indeed begun to follow the path of negotiation and dialogue, which are essential for the full restoration of peace. They have been working to strengthen, adapt and manage the African Union mechanism. Let me mention here the acceleration of the implementation of the Protocol establishing the mechanism for the Council on Peace and Security as well as the efforts to establish the Pan-African Parliament, with a view to allowing all African peoples to contribute effectively to the development process.

Africa has emphasized certain priorities: food security, medical services and the development of educational institutions in order to achieve the goal of education for all. Investment in those areas has been encouraged, and joint projects have been initiated among the various countries. My country participated in the area of metallurgy, agriculture, wood harvesting and development projects, *inter alia*.

The General Assembly and other international forums have asked the international community and the United Nations to support the African initiative for the restoration of peace and security, and to help implement NEPAD. Cooperation between the African Union and the European Union is multifaceted, and we would like to mention in that regard the debt that has been forgiven by some countries in the context of official financial assistance. We have seen an increase in economic and technical cooperation among African, Asian and Latin American countries. This represents a real opportunity for cooperation among developing and African countries, which have long tried to establish this kind of triangular cooperation.

Furthermore, the United Nations has supported African efforts to restore peace and security on the African continent. Accordingly, peacekeeping missions were sent, along with special representatives, to encourage dialogue and to bring about national reconciliation in those countries in conflict. Certain United Nations agencies have adopted programmes to respond to Africa's priorities: peace and security in Africa, food security, the provision of potable water, improvement of health services, information and communications technologies and the reintegration of refugees and internally displaced persons and the use of national resources.

All those measures aim in the right direction, but a great deal remains to be done in the entire African continent. All its leaders have expressed their conviction that we must close the development gap, which has widened throughout centuries of unjust relations. All necessary resources should be used to finance NEPAD's programmes.

Though it is clear that Africa has benefited from the increase in official development assistance during the previous period, it is not sufficient. Therefore the development partners must support Africa in order that peace and security may be restored on the continent and ignorance, hunger and disease overcome. As the Secretary-General has said, the increase in official development assistance remains very modest compared to the assistance given to farmers in developed countries. Therefore this policy must be reviewed because of its adverse consequences on the African economy. In addition, the drop in agricultural output has jeopardized the lives of millions of people.

It is clear that the measures that have been taken by developed countries have reduced the debt burden of African States. However, a great deal of money is required to pay off the interest that is still owed, which has a negative impact on the educational, health and other sectors. We must resolve this longstanding problem. If we do not do so, unemployment will rise, leading to tension, desperation, marginalization and many other problems.

The Secretary-General in his two reports has made several recommendations as to how to overcome those problems standing in the way of the achievement of NEPAD's goals. This is very important, especially with respect to peace, security and development in Africa. Those objectives must be attained. However, we deem it necessary for the international community to focus on certain issues in order to stabilize Africa and to ensure that that partnership is genuine. Those issues are the following.

First, it is necessary to respect African societies, their histories and their cultures, and political conditions must not be imposed on them. Their characteristics must at all times be taken into account.

Secondly, donor partners need to realize that the more assistance they provide, the more they will help African efforts to put an end to conflicts and to help their societies socially and materially. As an example, I can cite restricting or curbing migration through the

adoption of administrative and legislative measures. It is clear that development programmes can assist countries that are experiencing emigration to stop it altogether.

Thirdly, we need to improve the infrastructure, including communications and roads. In that way, we can gain the maximum benefit from the resources provided and can finally solve the problem of food security.

Fourthly, we must resolve problems related to technology transfer in the development, economic and social sectors.

Fifthly, we must take into account the suffering of African peoples in past centuries and the pillaging of their natural resources.

The Secretary-General has said that Africa is at a turning point. That is true. The conflict settlement process has truly begin in a number of countries; African heads of State have reaffirmed their commitment to NEPAD's objectives; and the contributions of NEPAD's partners are encouraging. We must promote peace and development throughout the African continent. Any hesitation in that regard would constitute a political and moral failure. African countries and the rest of the international community, including the United Nations system and all other concerned parties, must together meet the challenge of developing Africa in its entirety.

Mr. Hachani (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): I am pleased to take the floor under agenda item 39 (a), "New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support". In that regard, I should like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (A/58/254). In addition, we should like to take note of the statement made this morning on behalf of the African Union by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Mozambique and the statement made this afternoon by the Permanent Representative of Morocco on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Tunisia attaches great importance to our debate today, which attests to the commitment of United Nations Member States to supporting African development efforts. It offers us the opportunity to help address the challenge represented by implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). We should recall that, in the Millennium Declaration, our heads of State or Government

committed themselves to helping Africans in their fight to establish lasting peace and development and to eliminate poverty in order to integrate the African continent into the world economy.

In launching NEPAD, African leaders strove to reaffirm their collective will to promote the African continent within the framework of an integrated action plan based on a comprehensive concept of the attributes of sustainable development and relying primarily on Africa's own capacities. It is reassuring to note that this initiative has benefited from the support of the international community, particularly the Group of Eight (G-8), the countries of the European Union, international financial institutions, the Secretary-General and the Economic and Social Council. We welcome the process in support of NEPAD, furthered at the Third Tokyo International Conference on African Development.

Since its launching, NEPAD has seen notable progress in its implementation. The Partnership attaches crucial importance to areas important for the continent such as regional integration, agriculture, food security, health, education, infrastructure, industrialization, the environment and tourism. Several African countries have undertaken measures with a view to establishing a national coordination body for NEPAD. As far as Tunisia is concerned, our country's economic and social policy is in harmony with the Partnership.

The United Nations system has a crucial role to play in terms of cooperation and coordination among its various components to mobilize the support necessary to implement NEPAD effectively. We welcome the fact that several institutions and agencies of the United Nations system have aligned their activities with NEPAD's priorities. We also stress the importance of involvement by the private sector, civil society and non-governmental organizations and of public support for its implementation. We express our appreciation to the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, under the able guidance of Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, for its efforts in coordinating global activities to promote support for NEPAD. The Office certainly needs continued and even enhanced support from the United Nations Secretariat to continue its positive activities on behalf of our continent.

Africa's efforts cannot be successful without substantial support from the international community. Such solidarity should take the form of sufficient and reliable resources on the one hand, and favourable

external environment on the other. The scope of the problems and the complexity of the obstacles that the African continent must overcome to build the foundations of its infrastructure and socio-economic development demand that we be far more resolute and devote far more resources at both the national and international levels to ensuring for Africa, along with the world's other regions, economic growth and sustained and lasting development that will enable them to attain the Millennium Development Goals.

Over the past decade, many African countries intensified the process of democratization, of strengthening civil society and of promoting human rights and respect for the rule of law. African countries have also begun economic reforms to promote the establishment of solid macroeconomic foundations and the creation of an environment conducive to sustainable development, foreign direct investment and poverty reduction, particularly through effective public management. However, we must acknowledge that the current efforts of developed countries and the United Nations system still do not rise to the magnitude of the problems Africa must face. That insufficiency can be seen in official development assistance, investment and the problem of indebtedness. Indeed, official development assistance, despite the efforts of African countries to better utilize it, is constantly declining.

Africa's marginalization in the area of foreign direct investment is comparable to its marginalization in the area of trade. Despite African countries' considerable efforts to implement reforms in their trade policies, Africa's share of the world market has remained weak, representing less than 2 per cent. That situation is particularly disturbing, and the international community must help African countries put in place the material, institutional and organizational capacities necessary to support efforts aimed at promoting trade, improving market access, further reducing customs tariffs and lifting non-tariff barriers to African products.

Indebtedness remains one of the principal obstacles to economic recovery and sustained growth in Africa. The international community must continue to cooperate to lighten that burden. In this respect, we call upon creditor countries, private banks and multilateral financial institutions to help African countries to emerge more quickly and sustainably from their state of indebtedness, through the accelerated application of an enhanced and broadened Heavily

Indebted Poor Countries Debt (HIPC) Initiative. We are, moreover, concerned about the fact that some countries that have reached the completion point have seen their indebtedness indicators worsen due to a drop in export revenue, often as a result of volatile commodity prices.

Countries emerging from conflict also need special treatment, and we must be flexible in providing support to them and generous in treating their debt arrears.

Information and communication technologies (ICT) are increasingly acting as a catalyst for the promotion of social and economic development in African countries. African countries must develop ICT as an integral part of their national and regional development programmes. For their part, Africa's international partners must consider information and communication technologies as a matter of priority for African development. The convening of the World Summit on the Information Society in Geneva in December this year and in Tunis in November 2005 will provide an opportunity for us to further examine the best ways and means of using ICT for African development.

We are convinced that the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) provides us with an appropriate framework for the development of our continent. We take this opportunity to reiterate our appeal to the international community to take the necessary steps to provide the required assistance and support to that initiative.

With respect to the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa, the Tunisian delegation would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report contained in document A/58/352 before us. The most important lesson to be learned from that report is that, despite the progress achieved in implementing the recommendations, weak human and institutional capacity, a lack of financial resources, especially from foreign sources, as well as the continuation of conflict — both within and between States — slow and sometimes obscure that progress.

With regard to the promotion of peace and security, we call upon the international community and the United Nations system to involve themselves more fully in the prevention, management and resolution of conflict in Africa. We also call for greater support for African initiatives in resolving conflict, including for

the operation of the Peace and Security Council established by the African Union.

Tunisia, which participates in a number of peacekeeping operations in Africa, reaffirms its ongoing determination to help its brother countries to overcome crises, as well as its commitment in support of operations decided upon by the Security Council to maintain security and stability in Africa.

Mr. Neil (Jamaica): The Jamaican delegation wishes to align itself with the statement made this afternoon by the Permanent Representative of Morocco, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Our delegation welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), contained in document A/58/254. The report shows that a positive start has been made and that NEPAD is beginning to register some progress in important areas. At the same time, the report draws attention to major challenges and constraints. There are severe problems, although they can be overcome. They arise from continued difficulties associated with unresolved conflicts, the ravages of the HIV pandemic and the economic challenges of globalization. Developing and sustaining momentum for NEPAD will require two things: a collective effort in Africa towards internal stabilization; and a commitment to the delivery of resources from the donor community. It matters to all of us that, through our combined effort, NEPAD should succeed. For our delegation this is a special priority, for Africa has always been close to the hearts of the Jamaican people.

In reviewing the progress made so far, there is reason for some cautious optimism. We note an increasing level of official development assistance in recent years, reversing the steady decline of the 1990s. But the level still remains substantially below that of 1990, despite the overall growth in the world economy. We therefore place great reliance on fulfilment of the pledges made at the Monterrey and Johannesburg conferences, as well as those made by the Group of Eight at the Evian Summit. The expected increase in quantum of official development assistance should be combined with further improvements in aid effectiveness by removing procurement requirements, excessive bureaucratic procedures and the conditionalities which restrict the delivery of development cooperation.

With regard to debt relief, we are encouraged that there is some movement under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt (HIPC) Initiative, but we are still worried by the reported complexities of the process. The qualification standards and complicated requirements may still be hindering the delivery of benefits promised under the programme.

The trade and investment pattern shows a mixed picture. Investment flows are not promising and, although there are some special arrangements to stimulate exports, they are still not enough to bring significant change. To generate investment flows, special promotional programmes will be needed beyond the mere liberalization of investment regimes. In this regard, we applaud the initiative of two European States for providing a fund for guarantees for particular areas of investment.

With reference to trade, if the Doha agenda is to help Africa, it is not just a matter of removing subsidies and opening new markets; there is a need for some stabilization of commodity prices. And all of that will have to be combined with the building of productive capacity. This will require a huge investment in the development of physical infrastructure and technological innovation in all sectors.

In agriculture, there is a need for innovation, not only for the expansion of agricultural exports, but also to break the recurring cycle of crop failures so as to improve food security. As regards industrialization, there is still a long way to go. But this must be an important part of an economic strategy for diversification with a view to achieving higher levels of economic growth, reducing vulnerability and increasing employment opportunities.

In all of this, there is an important role for the State to manage and stimulate the development of these important sectors. It goes beyond ensuring conditions of peace and stability and developing sound governance principles and practices. The building of institutional capacity and a social and legal framework is an important foundation for the development process. Education and public health are important priorities of the moment in the building of the social infrastructure. But the public sector also needs to contribute to promoting enterprise development and production facilities. Africa needs help in all of these areas, help which should be provided in a way that is tailored to African needs and the African cultural environment.

We are greatly encouraged by the determination manifested by the African Union to make its own arrangements for monitoring governance issues and to be engaged in the conflict resolution and the promotion of peace and stability. Of special importance is the evolution of regional mechanisms, under the aegis of the African Union, with respect to conflict prevention and reduction. We also look forward to the establishment of a pan-African parliament to promote development and integration and to the establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union.

With regard to the role of the United Nations, we can see that there is movement towards collaboration within the system. The coordination of the various agencies is now being oriented towards achieving NEPAD's priorities and working with the appropriate African regional and subregional organizations. We welcome the establishment within the Secretariat of the Office of the Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Africa, which is playing a strategic role in this effort. We can only hope that this coordination does not become so overloaded with bureaucracy that it stifles creative efforts and the implementation of development projects. What we want to see are concrete results flowing from organizational improvements in the system.

I mentioned earlier the importance of building productive capacity. In this age of globalization, competitiveness and efficiency are of paramount importance. There is obviously a need to work closely with civil society to strengthen the private sector and to ensure that African entrepreneurship and indigenous capability are encouraged and developed to take advantage of economic opportunities in the global system. These are things that cannot be left to chance and that requires special attention on the part of the directing agencies of each country, working in cooperation with bilateral and multilateral agencies.

The international community should be careful to avoid the imposition on Africa of economic models and development policies that bear no relations to a country's social, political and economic realities. If doctrinaire prescriptions are applied or are required by international cooperation, it will not help Africa. We therefore continue to stress African ownership of NEPAD and African priorities as defined by Africans themselves. The role of the international community is a supportive one. That spirit of partnership and

solidarity should be driven by a sense of responsibility to lend support and not to dictate what is to be done.

The people of the Caribbean Community have a special linkage and kinship with Africa, and we fully support the provision of substantial international support for Africa. As indicated by the representative of Guyana this morning, we are making our own modest contribution, particularly in the area of capacity-building, and we intend to explore all avenues to give concrete support to African development initiatives.

It is not necessary at this time to stir up the passions of historical grievance, but we should remember that Africa has suffered from plunder and exploitation. NEPAD provides the framework and also the opportunity for redressing the balance and for reversing the neglect of previous decades. We look forward to making this the beginning of a brighter future.

Mr. Dangué Réwaka (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): A little more than a year ago, in this very Hall, the General Assembly held a debate devoted to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). During that important meeting, heads of State or Government of the African countries came to ask for the international community's support in implementing the Partnership, on which the future of Africa henceforth would lie.

We are here today to take stock of the progress we have attained in the implementation of NEPAD. Agenda item 39 (a), which we are now considering, was conceived with this in mind. We welcome the first report of the Secretary-General reviewing the actions that have been undertaken at the national, regional and global level to contribute to the implementation of this major partnership. The report (A/58/254) constitutes beyond doubt a reference tool on the basis of which we must shape our future cooperation, cooperation which must be marked by solidarity and complementarity.

In Africa, NEPAD will henceforth be an integral part of national development strategies, thanks in particular to the establishment in most of our countries of focal points. Unfortunately, however, their disparate and diverse character dilutes the collective momentum to which the Partnership gave rise in the continent. Could not the United Nations help us to elaborate a standard focal point to be used as a reference and which would help us truly integrate NEPAD into our national development policies? That would enable all our countries to speak the same language and to use the

same indicators in the process of implementing NEPAD.

To the problem of the diversity of focal points we add another one: the multi-sectoral dimension of NEPAD. Instead of dispersing our efforts over all sectors, it would be wise for us to target two or three that have a comprehensive impact. With that in mind, hunger, malnutrition and the pandemics of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, which today are the main obstacles to the development of Africa, must constitute the leitmotif of our concerns.

Resolution 57/297 rightly emphasized the need for including the industrialization of Africa in this first report on the implementation of NEPAD. It is more important than ever that the industrialization of Africa

be directed towards the resolution of certain major issues, such as the fight against HIV/AIDS and the strengthening of the health and food systems of our countries.

We would like, finally, to welcome all the initiatives taken at both the bilateral and multilateral levels to mobilize new resources for NEPAD. I am thinking in particular of the pledges made by the European Union and the United States of America to devote respectively 150 million euros and \$15 billion to the campaign against HIV/AIDS in Africa. We encourage them to further intensify their efforts of solidarity with Africa, where poverty, war and disease have become the daily fate of the people of the continent.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.



General Assembly

Fifty-eighth session

34th plenary meeting

Thursday, 16 October 2003, 10 a.m.
New York

Official Records

President: The Hon. Julian R. Hunte (Saint Lucia)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 124 (continued)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/58/432)

The President: The Assembly will consider a report of the Fifth Committee on agenda item 124 entitled "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations", document A/58/432. If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the report of the Fifth Committee that is before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records.

May I remind members that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that

"When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far possible, explain its vote only once, that is, either in the

Committee or in plenary meeting unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendation contained in the report of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take a decision in the same manner as was done in the Fifth Committee.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 58/1).

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 124.

Agenda item 12

Report of the Economic and Social Council

Draft resolution (A/58/L.1)

The President: The General Assembly will take up agenda item 12, entitled "Report of the Economic

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and Social Council", in order to consider a draft resolution entitled "Open-ended panel of the General Assembly on commodities", issued as document A/58/L.1.

We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/58/L.1. I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Ms. Kelley: Under the terms of operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution A/58/L.1, the General Assembly would decide to convene an open-ended panel of the General Assembly on commodities, to be chaired by the President of the General Assembly, with a maximum of six panelists from among the independent eminent persons and lead discussants on 27 October 2003, from 3 to 5 p.m.

It is estimated that the convening of the open-ended panel would require provision of travel costs for six panelists in the amount of \$16,400. These will be absorbed within existing extra-budgetary resources.

The convening of the open-ended panel on 27 October would give rise to additional requirements for conference-servicing. The related conference-servicing requirements, at full cost, is estimated at \$13,600. Since a Main Committee of the General Assembly cancelled its initially planned meeting on 27 October, the proposed meeting of the Open-ended panel on commodities could be absorbed within the existing conference-servicing resources.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/58/L.1, entitled "Open-ended panel of the General Assembly on commodities".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/58/L.1?

Draft resolution A/58/L.1 was adopted (resolution 58/2).

The President: Before giving the floor to the speaker in explanation of vote, may I remind delegations that the explanations of vote are limited to ten minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Scott (United States of America): The United States notes that the report of the Panel of Experts on Commodities had already been allocated to the Second Committee by the General Committee. We are confident that the Committee has the expertise to do

justice to the topic and we also note that this item has been biennialized. In the interest of streamlining the agenda of the General Assembly and ensuring the greatest possible efficiency, we hope that in the future, efforts will be redoubled to avoid duplicating agenda items.

The President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of vote. The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 12.

Agenda item 39 (continued)

New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

(a) New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

Report of the Secretary-General (A/58/254)

Note by the Secretary-General on proposed revisions to programme 8 of the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005: United Nations support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (A/58/83)

Report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (A/58/16, chapter III, section B, programme 8; chapter IV, section B)

(b) Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Report of the Secretary-General (A/58/352)

Mr. De Alba (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico is convinced that we will be able to attain the objectives and the Goals of the Millennium Declaration only if we are able to incorporate the African continent onto the path of sustainable development; that is to say, if we achieve substantial progress in promoting the political, economic and social development of the region. That is why we are concerned about the region's current situation and the prospects for development.

We note particularly, in this context, the *Human Development Report 2003*, which clearly makes the point that, unless the situation quickly improves, sub

Saharan Africa will achieve the goal of providing universal primary education only by 2129, will reduce extreme poverty in half only by 2147 and will reduce child mortality by two thirds only by 2165. This situation is economically unsustainable, politically unviable and morally unacceptable.

Development can be achieved only in an atmosphere of peace, security and political stability. However, in Africa we frequently encounter a mix of socio-economic problems and political factors that raise the risk of instability and violence, which consequently cause institutional failure and the outbreak of conflict, as well as ongoing and often serious violations of human rights and the rule of law. These violent situations often keep Africa from fully benefiting from its vast natural and human resources.

As a member of the Security Council, Mexico has sought to have that body pay particular attention to Africa's problems and to deal with them in a comprehensive manner. As far as my delegation is concerned, security in the region hinges in large measure on the existing capability to resolve socio-economic problems and international cooperation for such work. Mexico also has supported a strategic partnership between the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly itself, to ensure the complementarity of efforts.

My delegation sees ample opportunity, in terms of its respective mandates and approaches, for joint work to be done for Africa by our Organization's main organs. Mexico salutes the leadership of the African Union and of other regional and subregional organizations, and invites them to continue to closely cooperate with the United Nations in their search for innovative solutions for conflict prevention and resolution and to promote political, economic and social development. Cooperation between these African organizations and the United Nations in the cases of Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to cite just a few examples, marks a sound step in this effort to build strategic alliances, which must be strengthened.

Notwithstanding the recent achievements made in the context of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, much still remains to be done to lighten the debt burden of African countries. It is unacceptable that several continue to spend more money on debt

servicing than on health and education, particularly when the deterioration in their debt indicators can be attributed to a decline in their export income, which is often caused by instability in commodity prices. African countries need to grow, and trade, as we declared in the Monterrey Consensus, can serve as an essential engine for achieving that growth.

To build an open and non-discriminatory trade system, we must push for the elimination of subsidies, which are unjust and unfair trade practices. Special attention will have to be paid to trade in agricultural products and livestock exported by developing countries to industrialized ones. Non-tariff barriers must be eliminated. We must also break the vicious circle whereby, on the one hand, the donor countries transfer resources as aid for development to the recipient countries, while, on the other hand, they impede their progress by imposing trade restrictions.

In conclusion, let me refer to the HIV/AIDS scourge as the greatest challenge facing African countries in the area of public health. Mexico wishes to reaffirm that, in keeping with the recent agreements of the World Trade Organization, it will encourage the production of generic medication of proven quality for people that need them in the least developed countries. Mexico is also convinced of the importance of regional and international cooperation, for which we offer our expertise from public and private institutions to train healthcare personnel, to share the experience we have built and provide technical advice in designing indicators that allow us to evaluate both the impact of the epidemic and the global response to it.

Mexico also expresses its firm support for the Secretary-General's recommendation to put an immediate end to the use of mercenaries and child soldiers and for Africa countries to commit themselves to halting arms proliferation and to reduce military expenditures. An effort of that magnitude demands the matching, clear-cut support of the international community.

Nana Effah-Apenteng (Ghana): I would like to join previous speakers in thanking the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the progress made in the implementation of and international support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), as well as for his report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. We are also

grateful to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Mozambique for leading the debate on these items. I associate myself with the statement made by Morocco, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

History has recorded Ghana's primary role in fostering African unity. The President of the first Republic of Ghana was one of the founding fathers of the Organization of African Unity, which has evolved into the African Union. We in Ghana are very proud of this history and have striven over the years to remain faithful and true to this tradition. Ghana's commitment to the unity of the African continent is an article of faith, which is inscribed in the national constitution and has been strictly adhered to by successive regimes. It is this belief that led us to actively participate in the preparatory process that led to the creation of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in 1975.

For economic integration in any framework to succeed, good governance, peace and security are absolutely necessary to create an environment conducive to sustained economic activity. Ghana, therefore, has a vested interest in promoting these values in the West African subregion. This explains our enthusiastic participation with like-minded countries in the first ever subregional peacekeeping initiative, the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in the first Liberian civil war in 1990 and subsequently in Sierra Leone, as well as the current peace process in Liberia.

Ghana, on 28 December 2000 made a smooth transfer of power from one democratically elected Government to another, the first such event in the 43 years of Ghana's existence as a nation. We have a constitution and there is overwhelming consensus among our people that democratic constitutional rule is and should be the form of governance in our country.

Ghana, therefore, when NEPAD was launched in 2001, had all the necessary credentials and was ready to integrate the priorities of NEPAD into its national policies and development planning framework and to mobilize domestic resources in support of the initiative. In pursuit of its total commitment to NEPAD, Ghana has taken the practical step of creating the Ministry of Regional Cooperation and NEPAD as our national focal point. The mission statement of the Ministry states, in part, that it exists to ensure effective formulation, coordination, implementation and monitoring of development policies and plans that will

facilitate accelerated national goals and balance development within a regionally integrated system.

Since its creation, the new Ministry has participated in several events organized by NEPAD, including meetings in Johannesburg and Abuja, culminating in Ghana declaring its readiness to be the first country to be peer-reviewed and to be responsible for leading the implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism. In this connection, we wish to emphasize that the African Peer Review Mechanism should not be seen as an extraneous condition proposed by our development partners, but as an idea which African leaders themselves, in their collective wisdom, have recognized as a useful tool to promote the development of the continent. We are therefore encouraged by the fact that 16 countries have so far volunteered to participate in it. We in Ghana eagerly look forward to the publication of the guidelines some time next month to enable us to take the process further.

As a way of popularizing NEPAD at the country level, which has been identified in the Secretary-General's report as a constraint facing the implementation of NEPAD, our national focal point has also organized a series of workshops for key stakeholders, including the media, the parliamentary select committee on foreign affairs and a cross-section of the Ghanaian public. The latest workshop, held by the ministry on the African Peer Review Mechanism was on 11 October 2003, during which the Minister announced that the cabinet had approved the establishment of a national peer review governing council intended to initiate a local peer review mechanism to prepare Ghana adequately for assessment by an external body of eminent persons. The governing council will see to it that technical assessments are conducted prior to the visit of the country review team. He further stressed that knowledge and the operation of NEPAD should move beyond the heads of State and Government to ownership by ordinary people to ensure its success. In this regard, it should be pointed out that the participants in the workshop were drawn from key stakeholders, such as the public sector, the private sector, civil society and non-governmental organizations.

Ghana shares the view expressed by the United Nations Secretary-General in his first consolidated report on NEPAD that the regional economic

communities, as vehicles for regional development and integration, are well-placed to take on the tasks of implementing the regional and sub-regional direction of NEPAD programmes. It is only by combining their development potentials and by overcoming existing boundaries through integrative mechanisms that African countries will be able to overcome these real constraints to economic and social development — development within a dynamic global economy, characterized by the formation of powerful and highly competitive regional economic groupings. We hope, therefore, that a quick solution will be found to the problem caused by the weak link between the implementation committee and the regional economic committees, which has been identified as yet another constraint in the implementation of NEPAD.

At this juncture, my delegation wishes to commend both the NEPAD secretariat and the implementation committee for their role in ensuring the implementation of projects and identifying their priorities under NEPAD, even though we recognize that much more remains to be done.

As stated in our statement in the general debate of the Second Committee, Ghana is of the view that support by the international community for NEPAD cannot be divorced from the broader context of support by the international community for the efforts of developing countries for poverty eradication. There is a widespread view that, as a result of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the social and economic fields, there is currently unprecedented agreement among the international community on the urgent need for a concerted and committed effort in the fight against poverty and better consensus on the means to achieve this goal.

The architecture of this mutual responsibility is supposedly based on a two-pillar structure whereby developing countries get primary responsibility for implementing policies, improving governance and strengthening institutional capacity to accelerate growth and reduce poverty, as Africa is seeking to do through NEPAD, while the international community takes responsibility for buttressing these efforts through substantial, better coordinated and more comprehensive support, through development assistance, market access, debt relief and technical assistance. Actual trends in the world economy, however, do not concern this view. The *Human Development Report 2003* states that the rest of the

world has left sub-Saharan Africa behind and that it will take 150 years for that region to achieve the Millennium Development Goals targeted for the year 2015.

The Secretary-General's report has also rightly identified lack of adequate funding as one of the four constraints facing the implementation of NEPAD. While expressing Ghana's gratitude to our development partners who have either individually or collectively supported NEPAD in one form or another, we hold the view that for things to improve for the African continent, the international community, particularly the industrialized nations, should genuinely appreciate the urgency of the situation and offer commensurate support and assistance to NEPAD to re-launch the continent's development.

The current leadership of the continent has resolved to nurture Africa back to prosperity in the framework of NEPAD and is looking forward to practical support through the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields. We acknowledge that there has been a modicum of progress in a few areas, but, in general, progress in several key areas, which include trade, official development assistance and external indebtedness, has been weak or non-existent and in some cases there have been setbacks. It is therefore imperative for the international community to redouble its efforts in implementing agreed strategies and partnerships in Africa to reverse their decline.

We are confident that the United Nations system will continue to play a supportive role in the implementation of NEPAD.

In that regard, we wish to put on record our sincere appreciation to the Secretary-General for establishing the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, with the responsibility for coordinating the United Nations global advocacy in support of NEPAD. The Office should be accorded the priority it deserves, given the onerous responsibility that has been entrusted to it. We therefore call on the General Assembly to ensure that adequate resources are allocated to the Office in order to enable it to play the role envisaged for it. We look forward to discussing with other delegations the details of the requirements of the Office during the consideration of the budget for the biennium 2004-2005.

With respect to causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace, it is pertinent to stress that, although many conflicts continue to rage in Africa, it is a positive development that there has not been any new outbreak of conflict during the period under review. Indeed, it is more encouraging that considerable progress has been made in the search for solutions to the conflicts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Ethiopia and Eritrea, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone and Liberia. We hope that when the African Union is able to establish the Peace and Security Council, more efforts will be focused on achieving lasting solutions to these conflicts. The Economic Community of West African States will continue to remain engaged in the search for durable peace and stability in West Africa.

Mr. Wako (Kenya): At the outset, I would like to commend you, Mr. President, on the able manner in which you have continued to guide our work during this session. My delegation would like to associate itself with the statement made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mozambique, on behalf of the African Group, as well as with that of the distinguished representative of Morocco, on behalf of G-77 and China.

I would like to commend the Secretary-General for his first consolidated report on progress in implementation and international support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (A/58/254). Kenya, in the light of our history and tradition, gives its full support to NEPAD, which is an African initiative that sends a signal that Africa has come of age in the global village and takes primary responsibility for its development and destiny. In view of the very wide gap that exists, in economic and social terms, between Africa and the developed world, as outlined in the many documents including various human rights and development reports, urgent and radical steps need to be taken to close the gap. It is noteworthy that African countries have moved with the requisite urgency to establish various institutional arrangements to ensure the smooth implementation and overall success of NEPAD.

However, much more still remains to be done. We have noted that progress in Africa on priority areas of NEPAD is at different stages. I will give three examples. First, several countries have taken steps to create national focal points for NEPAD. I am glad to state that Kenya has already established a NEPAD

secretariat, which will coordinate and oversee NEPAD activities within the country and abroad, in the Ministry of National Planning and Development. It would be a good objective if in the course of the coming year, all African countries established such national focal points for NEPAD.

Secondly, the African Peer Review Mechanism, which is an innovative mechanism for monitoring progress towards good economic and political governance, is in place. Kenya is among the 16 countries that have joined this Mechanism. It is imperative that all African countries join that Mechanism in the course of the coming year in order to show the commitment of Africa to good governance and the seriousness with which Africa takes its responsibility to ensure that good governance prevails in Africa.

Thirdly, there is need to think of modalities for integrating NEPAD principles, objectives and priorities in national economic development programmes. In Kenya, an attempt has been made to incorporate them in the economic recovery strategy for wealth and employment creation. NEPAD's five-year strategic plan should, when finalized and where possible, be incorporated in the national economic plans.

At the regional level, efforts are being made to re-orient the activities of regional communities to reflect NEPAD priorities in their work programmes. For its part, Kenya, which is a member of the Steering Committee, will host the regional summit on NEPAD for East Africa, the Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa at the end of this month. That forum will, among other things, take stock and chart the way forward for the Plan's implementation. Within the East African Community, specific areas of priority action include the roads network, infrastructure and energy development. We therefore support the role of regional groups, as has been outlined in the report of the Secretary-General (A/58/254).

After the failures of Africa in the last four decades, African countries are now showing much determination and commitment in implementing NEPAD. At the same time, they recognize that there is much to be done to achieve the goals of the New Partnership, which are in line with the Millennium Development Goals. However, actions by African countries on their own will not be enough to achieve faster economic and social development. The spirit of

partnership embedded in the design of NEPAD and reflected in its engagement with the international community provides hope and encouragement for its implementation. Moreover, the commitments that have been made by Africa's development partners in various forums provide a solid basis for scaling up support for NEPAD. In that regard, we urge the disbursement of the resources already pledged by development partners.

In order for NEPAD to succeed, international support needs to be enhanced in the form of official development assistance, debt relief and trade and foreign direct investment, particularly the financing of infrastructure. In that regard, it is vital for our development partners to ensure that their aid and trade policies are complementary. We are nevertheless encouraged by the commitments and initiatives of our development partners, notably the United States of America, the G-8, the European Union and other bilateral arrangements, but much more needs to be done.

Although we have witnessed an increase in official development assistance to Africa, it remains far too small as compared to the levels of the 1990s. Of course, Africa does not want to rely on official development assistance. But we believe that improving market access for Africa's agricultural and non-agricultural goods is key to its ability to finance development. Thus, as a matter of priority, developed countries should phase out agricultural subsidies to their agricultural products and remove other trade barriers for African exports, and, in particular, remove tariff and non-tariff barriers to products of interest to African countries. Furthermore, debt relief is an imperative, as debts are serious bottlenecks and obstacles to efforts to eradicate poverty in Africa. There is a need for the development partners to be more understanding on this issue, for they also share part of the blame for the debt crisis.

Kenya is grateful to the Secretary-General for having established the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, currently headed by an able diplomat experienced in African affairs, Ibrahim Gambari, whose mandate includes coordinating global advocacy in support of NEPAD; coordinating all reports to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on NEPAD; and following up on the recommendations of global conferences and summits related to Africa. We note also that that Office serves as the focal point for NEPAD at United Nations

Headquarters. We hope that the Office will be given the necessary financial and other support in order to enable to discharge its mandate more effectively. Kenya will be making a contribution when budget issues come to be discussed. We would like sincerely to thank the Secretary-General for this and other efforts in the context of continued support by the United Nations system and the international community for NEPAD.

I would now like to turn to item 39 (b), "Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa". We thank the Secretary-General for his report (A/58/352) on this matter. The recommendations contained in the report are far-reaching and well thought out. They constitute a solid foundation for addressing the major issues that hinder stability and development in Africa. However, we note with concern that progress in the various targeted areas has been slow and erratic.

Regrettably, conflicts continue to rage in Africa, hampering peace, stability and socio-economic development on the continent. Kenya therefore accords priority to the prevention, management and peaceful resolution of conflicts. We continue to spearhead the Inter-Government Authority on Development (IGAD) peace processes in southern Sudan and in Somalia. Negotiations on a peaceful solution are ongoing. On 23 September 2003, the warring parties in the Sudan signed a historic agreement in Naivasha, Kenya. That agreement, which addresses transitional security arrangements, will no doubt provide the basis for a bright and prosperous future for the people of the Sudan. The parties are due to reconvene shortly to discuss power-sharing, wealth-sharing and the status of the three disputed regions of the Sudan. Indeed, it is Kenya's belief that the peace process in the Sudan is irreversible.

However, in order to consolidate and guarantee a long-lasting peace, it is vital for the international community to play a greater role in the process. In this connection, I would like to urge the United Nations to play a leadership role in the post-conflict reconstruction of the Sudan and to request Member States to support the reconstruction.

On the Somali peace process, there has been encouraging progress in the negotiations. Only last month in Nairobi, representatives adopted the charter which is expected to lead to elections. Kenya

encourages the parties concerned to consolidate and take advantage of the gains so far made.

We appreciate the efforts of the Secretary-General in helping to find a peaceful solution to these and other conflicts in the region. We are particularly grateful for the United Nations initiative of preparing a draft humanitarian protocol for inclusion in the IGAD peace process for the Sudan. Equally welcome is the assistance given by the United Nations Development Fund for Women in establishing a women's resource centre for women representatives participating in the IGAD peace process for Somalia. We would like to encourage the United Nations further to expand its assistance to the two processes.

The role of Africa's other development partners and of the international community is crucial in resolving conflicts on the continent. Their support in strengthening African capacity for conflict resolution, among other things is needed now more than ever before.

The Secretary-General rightly singles out the proliferation of small arms and light weapons as one of the major causes of conflict in Africa. As a country that has suffered greatly from an influx of small arms and light weapons, Kenya is a key player in our subregional efforts to combat trafficking in such weapons.

The international community's priority must be to support subregional initiatives, since illicit arms trafficking thrives by exploiting the loopholes resulting from divergent national practices regulating private arms possession and trading. Nairobi, Kenya, hosts the Secretariat on Small Arms and Light Weapons, a regional initiative involving 10 countries of East Africa, the Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa. At the biennial conference on small arms and light weapons held in New York in July this year, Kenya presented a report on the activities of the Nairobi Secretariat and on the measures undertaken by the Government of Kenya at the national level to curb the menace.

We commend the United Nations for addressing this proliferation partly by encouraging the holding of workshops on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and launching a capacity-building programme for security forces on the control of small arms and light weapons in Central Africa. We look forward to some of these initiatives' being extended to our subregion, as indicated by the Department of Disarmament Affairs.

Kenya commends the achievements made by United Nations peacekeeping operations. Missions in Sierra Leone, Ethiopia and Eritrea and other parts of the world have succeeded in restoring peace and stability. The African Union and the United Nations have also played a positive role in tackling the crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

We commend the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for its efforts to restore normalcy in Liberia. While appreciating the important role played by the United Nations in consolidating peace and stability in the world, Kenya urges greater United Nations participation in African initiatives such as the peace processes led by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and by ECOWAS.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic has ravaged the continent and reversed the socio-economic gains made since independence. To counter the ravages of the pandemic, the Kenya Government has put in place various measures to curb the further spread of HIV/AIDS. As a result of those efforts, prevalence rates have been significantly reduced in the past four years. However, much remains to be done in this area. Last month, Kenya hosted the 13th International Conference on AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases in Africa, a forum that brought together more than 6,000 delegates from all over the world to discuss urgent measures that we all must take to combat the pandemic. We call upon the international community to intensify its efforts in fighting the scourge by, inter alia, providing adequate financial resources and enhanced access to antiretroviral drugs for the infected.

For peace and stability to flourish, good governance is a necessity. Indeed, good governance is a prerequisite for sustained growth. That challenge is one that Kenya has been able to meet. In December 2002, Kenya witnessed a historic moment when it held general elections that were universally recognized as free, fair and democratic and that led to a transfer of power. It is our strong belief that the opening up of a democratic space by leaders will go a long way in reducing conflicts and promoting development in Africa.

In conclusion, I believe we all realize that accelerated economic growth in Africa, initiated and driven by Africans themselves and supported by development partners, is in the wider interest of the

peace, stability and development of the entire international community.

Mr. Ul Haq (Pakistan): Mr. President, it is a privilege for me to participate in this important discussion under your stewardship. Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with African countries and supports all initiatives aimed at development of the African continent. It was in that spirit that we supported the initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

Pakistan received with interest the report of the Secretary-General (A/57/254), prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 57/7 of 4 November 2002. The report is a consolidated document detailing in depth the progress achieved in implementation of and support for NEPAD. We support the recommendations mentioned in the report, particularly the one requiring bold actions by all stakeholders to address the challenges and constraints identified in the report.

The primary objective of NEPAD was to eventually eradicate poverty in Africa and to place African countries on the path of sustainable growth and development, thus reversing the marginalization of Africa and integrating it into the globalization process. That is a formidable challenge requiring massive investment and technical support from all relevant stakeholders. Africa cannot meet such a gigantic challenge alone.

We are happy to note that this comprehensive programme, which is Africa-led, Africa-owned and Africa-driven, has taken off and is gaining momentum with the support of the international community, including the United Nations system, the private sector and civil society. In due course, the initiative will definitely change the fate of tens of millions of African people stricken by poverty, disease and conflict.

We have noted the important structural reforms undertaken by most African Governments, which are reflected in improved macro-economic management, trade liberalization and the promotion of greater and enhanced private sector participation. Whenever such reforms have been sustained and underpinned by civil peace, they have succeeded in enhancing growth and reducing poverty. However, the efforts of African countries have been constrained owing to a lack of coordination between regional economic communities and implementation committees, weak institutional

capacity and a lack of adequate funding. Effective strategies need to be developed to ensure that the ownership and leadership of the initiative remains with African nations.

What our African brothers and sisters need today is not a diagnosis of the causes of underdevelopment or prescriptive advice, but a strong helping hand from the international community to ensure NEPAD's success, especially through enhanced official development assistance, without conditionalities, the redemption of pledges to the Trust Fund for the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative and the provision of aid without strings attached. In addition, meaningful international support for NEPAD should include improved market access; accelerated and increased debt relief, including complete debt cancellation; deliberate efforts to increase the flow of foreign direct investment to African countries; the transfer of technology to African countries; human resource development, particularly in the education and health sectors; and a special and focused endeavour to arrest and eradicate HIV/AIDS.

We greatly appreciate the assistance provided to Africa by United Nations specialized agencies in the areas of peace and security, poverty alleviation, socio-economic development, governance and infrastructure development. However, much more needs to be done in support of NEPAD to strengthen the capacity of regional economic communities, the NEPAD secretariat and the Commission of the African Union. With international support through enhanced official development assistance, increased investment, a durable solution to the external debt burden and unhindered market access, the objective of integrating African countries into the global economy and the goals of durable peace and sustainable development can certainly be realized.

Pakistan has consistently supported Africa's political and economic aspirations. We are proud of our participation in several United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa. Our military and civilian personnel have been part of United Nations operations in Somalia, Namibia, Liberia, Western Sahara and Sierra Leone. Pakistan will continue to lend its moral and material support to African countries. Our technical assistance programme for Africa is an ongoing process aimed at training young professionals in diverse fields.

African people have long suffered. The challenges faced by Africa are colossal. NEPAD represents a realistic framework to meet those challenges. It is time that implementation focus on the areas that hinder us in attaining NEPAD's goals and in meeting its challenges. It is in that context that the international community can make its most profound contribution. For our part, we reaffirm Pakistan's continued support for NEPAD in every way possible.

Mr. Zenna (Ethiopia): Allow me to thank Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his comprehensive report on the progress made towards the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Let me seize this opportunity to express our profound appreciation to the Secretary-General, who has assured us of his full support since the inception of NEPAD. His continued commitment has helped mobilize the entire United Nations system and the global community in support of the development endeavour of Africa.

We note the untiring efforts of the Secretary-General in promoting international development, peace and security and in this regard welcome the establishment of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, headed by Ibrahim Gambari. We count on him and his colleagues to promote the values and principles of NEPAD throughout the world and to mobilize support for Africans towards the implementation of their initiative.

We urge that this Office be given all the necessary support to carry out its duties. In tandem with the basic principles of NEPAD, African countries and their partners have made important progress in developing institutions, projects and programmes and in enhancing consultation for implementation of the priorities of NEPAD.

Since the endorsement of NEPAD by the international community here at the United Nations last year, African countries have prepared detailed projects and programmes for its implementation and we have made progress in that regard. With respect to institution building, the necessary work was completed to implement the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). APRM documents have been prepared, 16 countries, including Ethiopia have acceded to the Mechanism and the initial panel of eminent persons has been appointed.

It is encouraging that the first APRM review will be conducted during the second half of this year. It is also important to note that the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme has been finalized. Based on this programme, detailed country and region-specific projects have been prepared for implementation. Those projects and programmes address intervention to improve food security and the productivity of the agricultural sector in various regions of the continent.

Efforts have also been made to address conflict in the African continent. In this regard, Africa is working in cooperation with the G-8 countries to prepare a joint plan to enhance Africa's capability to undertake key support operations. Progress in elaborating efforts in areas such as health, education, science and technology and environment and tourism have also been made.

The challenges and problems that prompted us to develop NEPAD and the socio-economic development programme of the African Union, which is aimed at regenerating and reviving the African continent, have not changed. It is therefore critical that we strengthen this partnership between Africa and the developed world and remain committed to the objectives of eradicating poverty and improving the quality of life of the African people.

In this regard, let me highlight the major challenges that require increased support by the United Nations and other donors. First, agricultural and rural development, economic diversification and environmental protection are the basic elements of NEPAD for which African efforts need to be backed by international cooperation.

The challenge of agriculture and food security still remain. We need to give high priority to agricultural development. The current food insecurity in Ethiopia, the Horn of Africa and Southern Africa need to be addressed.

In addition, we need to lay a foundation for sustainable agriculture. My country is taking measures such as water, harvesting, research and extension service, resettlement and similar other activities to minimize the effect of the current drought that haunts Ethiopia.

Secondly, it is of particular concern for the majority of African countries that not much has been done to tackle the impact of international price

fluctuations and the continued price decline in the key commodities of most of the least developed countries. This has continued to compromise not only the growth of their economies and their efforts at poverty-reduction, but also the sustainability of their debt burden.

A fall in the price of single commodity coffee over the last three years has forced 25 million people to fall below the poverty line. Children have been withdrawn from schools. Efforts at improving food security have been hampered. My country happens to be one of the countries affected by this negative development. In this regard we welcome the General Assembly President's initiative to put the commodity issue high on its agenda.

Thirdly, while we take note of the modest incremental increase in official developmental assistance flow to the continent in 2002, it falls far short of what is required to make a dent in the key development targets. At the current level of progress, Africa is unlikely to meet the Millennium Development Goals by the year 2015. While reforms are being undertaken by African countries to address the challenges of education, health and HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases, more investment is needed in this area.

Fourthly, despite the multitude of challenges in the economic and social fields, Africa's heavily indebted poor countries continue to spend more on debt servicing than on education and health.

I would like to once more emphasize that the conditions that necessitated the initiation of this dialogue among we Africans and the international community have not changed, and that the structural engagement between the donor countries and Africa must continue to be strained. We hope that one of the outcomes of this meeting will be an increased commitment and pledge of support in the earlier-mentioned areas, namely enhancing peace support operations, increased investment in agriculture and food security, addressing the issue of agricultural subsidies and other support measures that destabilize agriculture in Africa and mobilize additional resources to meet the Millennium Development Goals in Africa.

I wish now to turn to the second item on our agenda, "Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa". We would like once again to underscore the

inextricable link between peace and development which has been eloquently elaborated in the landmark 1998 report of the Secretary-General on this item (A/52/871-S/1998/318). We believe that the causes of conflict are multiple. However, poverty and marginalization are the key words to be used.

The complexity of the conflict in Africa warrants the involvement of a number of players in conflict resolution, including regional and subregional organizations. We commend the work of the African regional and subregional organizations. The role of the African Union and subregional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States, the Southern African Development Community and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development deserve our appreciation and need concerted support to strengthen their capacity in the prevention and management of conflicts.

In this connection, we take note with satisfaction of the cooperation between three countries, namely Mozambique, South Africa and my country Ethiopia as troop-contributors to the peacekeeping force of the African mission in Burundi. We also appreciate the support provided by the United States and the United Kingdom to this mission.

We would like to emphasize the need to further enhance the support of the international community for regional peacekeeping cooperation in Africa. We would also like to see increased cooperation among the United Nations, the African Union and the various subregional organizations involved in conflict prevention and management in Africa.

The challenges of post-conflict development and reconstruction in Africa are enormous. There is a need for the international community to assist the affected countries. Adequate resources must be provided to ensure the implementation of disarmament measures, including weapon collection, demobilization and reintegration programmes. Above all, adequate support must be provided for the rebuilding of infrastructure destroyed by prolonged conflict, income-generation programmes, demining activities, social services and the protection of vulnerable populations in war-torn countries.

The key question now with respect to this sub-item is how to follow up on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General. We look forward to seeing

innovative ideas on this issue and are ready to engage in constructive consultation with a view to addressing the matter.

Mr. Adechi (Benin) (*spoke in French*): I would like to congratulate the Secretary-General on the high quality of his report (A/58/254) to the Assembly on progress in the implementation of, and international support for, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and of his report (A/58/352) on implementation of his recommendations on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development. The joint consideration of these two sub-items at the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly underscores, if this were needed, the intrinsic link between peace and development and the urgent need to initiate a dual approach in tackling the challenges Africa needs to face.

The gravity of the situation in Africa poses a real danger for international peace and security. It is also disquieting for the safeguarding of human dignity. At the recent African Union meetings in Maputo, African States demonstrated their resolve to meet the challenges they are facing in the areas of reconstruction and peace-building in order to relaunch the development process, as well as in the area of addressing the causes of underdevelopment as a prerequisite for preserving peace and strengthening stability. One of the best instruments for commencing the development process is undoubtedly good governance, because corruption, social inequality and the absence of democracy generate tension and conflicts of interest, and exacerbate poverty. In that context, Benin reiterates its commitment to good governance as one of the prerequisites for achieving the NEPAD goals.

The New Partnership for Africa's Development bears the hope of the rebirth of the African continent. The implementation in an environment of transparency of the main focal points of that common, consensual programme will certainly take us further along the long road of growth and the campaign against poverty. The efforts of the African countries to improve and strengthen their economies might not, in the short and medium terms, bring all the expected results unless Africa's development partners assume their proper role in a true spirit of partnership, particularly in the mobilization of resources. The actions undertaken contain very high interim costs. Assistance measures must therefore be taken at the international level, in

particular in the areas of direct investment and trade. Moreover, the flow of official development assistance needs to be maintained in order to enable African countries to benefit from the concessional resources necessary for establishing socio-economic infrastructures. The coordinating role of the United Nations is crucial, which is why the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa should receive all necessary support. My delegation endorses the very relevant comments made by the Committee for Programme and Coordination including with respect to activities planned by the United Nations system for the implementation of NEPAD.

In resolution 57/7, the General Assembly made NEPAD the reference framework for Africa's development. Accordingly, performance indicators need to be developed to assess the implementation of the programme and the establishment of partnerships. We welcome the partnership between Africa and the Group of Eight (G-8). We also welcome the fact that the Third Tokyo International Conference on African Development attached great importance to NEPAD's role as the reference framework for Africa's development.

It is essential that United Nations strengthen its support for African initiatives, as Africa contains 34 of the least developed countries. It would thus be appropriate for the entities responsible for implementing NEPAD, when setting up their programmes, take into account the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010, whose low implementation rate is growing ever more alarming.

Benin, as Chairman of the Coordination Bureau for the Least Developed Countries, appeals to the responsibility and solidarity of the international community and our bilateral and multilateral partners. We must counter economic globalization, characterized by an implacable logic of exclusion, with a globalization of solidarity in order to tackle, in this environment of interdependence, the problems of humanity: poverty, pandemics, degradation of the environment, drug trafficking, debts and others. International cooperation and support for good governance will enable African countries to break the vicious circle of poverty, marginalization and prolonged destabilization.

Mr. Fall (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): I begin by reiterating my warmest compliments to you, Mr. President. I wish to say that Senegal, one of the founding members of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), is pleased to participate in this assessment of the past year's accomplishments in the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development and in the consideration of causes of conflicts and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. Both sub-items are the subjects of excellent reports to the Assembly by the Secretary-General, in documents A/58/254 and A/58/352 respectively.

Since the United Nations decided in September 2002 to make NEPAD the exclusive framework for its efforts for Africa, the implementation of the Partnership has more than ever been a core priority of the people, civil society organizations and leaders of Africa. Thus, working in concert based on a coherent, measured approach — and with the invaluable backing of the international community, the United Nations, the Group of Eight (G-8), the European Union, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and others — we have made significant progress towards realizing the NEPAD vision.

In that connection, allow me to refer to the integrated programme for the development of African agriculture adopted at the most recent Summit of the African Union and to the African Peer Review Mechanism, an intra-African mechanism for evaluation. These two priorities are a great source of satisfaction and a credit to our continent's resolve to take its future in hand, with the support and active solidarity of our bilateral and multilateral development partners.

In that vein, Senegal wishes to emphasize the growing interest shown in NEPAD by many countries and institutions in the North and the South alike. Special mention in that context is due to the G-8 for its important mobilization on behalf of Africa and to the United Nations system for the recent establishment of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, which our friend Under-Secretary-General Ibrahim Gambari is heading brilliantly. He deserves our increased support. It is also important to note and welcome the new framework of improved coordination of intervention on the ground of United Nations agencies and institutions based on five thematic clusters reflecting NEPAD priorities. Let us also not forget the recent Third Tokyo

International Conference on African Development in support of NEPAD.

While even the most skeptical now agree that NEPAD, far from being unrealistic or a collection of pious hopes, is an ambitious programme that is gradually assuming its full scope, it is imperative that African countries and our partners in development persevere to that end, which is at the very least salutary, and especially through concrete action. For our part, we Africans are aware of the need to pursue reforms designed to promote good public and private governance, strengthen institutional and human capacities and implement sound macroeconomic policy.

In this and other spheres, NEPAD's success will depend in large part on the increased support of our partners, notably for projects. Allow me to provide a partial list of some such projects under way and of others still in the planning stage. I would point to the gas pipeline in West Africa; the integrated electric network in Southern Africa; the Casablanca-Dakar, Algiers-Bamako and Tripoli-Niamey-Lagos road infrastructure projects; and, in the field of new information and communication technologies, the extension into the African interior of branch networks of optic fibres linking Europe and America to Dakar, Pretoria and Kuala Lumpur.

There is reason to welcome the 5 per cent increase — the first increase in three decades — of the volume of official development assistance. We hope that this dynamic trend will continue and grow even stronger. France and other European partners have committed themselves to ensuring that the goal of 0.7 per cent of gross national product — reaffirmed at Monterrey and Johannesburg — will soon be achieved. Senegal also welcomes such initiatives as the United States Millennium Challenge Account and the envisaged establishment of an international financing facility. These two mechanisms will allow us to explore new ways and means of financing development and to attain the objectives embodied in the Millennium Declaration and NEPAD. This innovative approach would naturally bolster debt-reduction measures, steps to enhance the flow of direct foreign investment into Africa, and the opening of the markets of developed countries to African products.

The issue of access for our products to the markets of the North looms particularly large and

justifies our massive disappointment in the resounding breakdown of the ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Cancún last month. Compounding the missed opportunity of the Doha Round, this failure has dampened the faith of Africans in multilateral trade negotiations. My country reiterates nevertheless that WTO remains the only body wherein problems relating to international trade are framed and discussed and must be resolved.

Senegal therefore resolutely welcomes the commitment recently made in Argentina by the developing countries to work to relaunch the negotiating process in the hope that relevant initiatives will be favourably received by our partners, whose multifaceted cooperation is highly appreciated in conflict resolution and the strengthening of the rule of law — two major imperatives that must be addressed above all by Africans themselves.

No assessment of Africa's situation can ignore the numerous conflicts that are mortgaging the continent's future growth and development. Building lasting peace is a long-term undertaking, to the success of which no effort must be spared. Senegal urges the Secretary-General to continue to publish his reports on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. We are indubitably at a juncture wherein the hopes placed in the United Nations are, to put it mildly, far from being fulfilled. This is an era in which humankind has yet to find a way to save itself from such urgent problems as the scandal of poverty and exclusion, the tragedy of conflicts and humanitarian disasters, the ravages of HIV/AIDS and related infectious diseases, threats to the environment, the impact of the digital divide and the perils of terrorism. The list goes on. The promotion of sustainable development in Africa will remain illusory so long as conflicts continue to ravage our continent. African leaders have therefore established such new mechanisms to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts as the Peace and Security Council and the NEPAD African Peer Review Mechanism.

A cursory consideration of the prospects for peace in Africa, particularly the West African subregion, will reveal that the forceful action of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and President Kufuor of Ghana have revived hopes in Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea-Bissau. Those countries, to which we are bound by ties of friendship, have been battered and are in dire need

of the political and financial support of the international community if they are to meet the enormous challenges of national reconciliation, reconstruction and economic and social recovery, best guarantees against the resurgence of the demons of instability and destabilization. In other words, in that subregion and elsewhere across the continent, great are the dangers arising from such recurrent phenomena as the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and their hideous corollary, mercenaries.

In light of the conclusions reached at a number of public meetings of the Security Council, it is high time to take the drastic measures recommended by ECOWAS and other subregional organizations to curtail and eliminate the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons. The economic and social development of that African subregion, and thus of Africa as a whole, is at stake. Senegal therefore pays tribute to France and the Netherlands for their initiative to ensure the adoption at the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly of a draft resolution on regional promotion within the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe of the United Nations Programme of Action to Combat the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

In conclusion, mindful of the need to act in concert to find a collective response to the global threat posed by HIV/AIDS to international peace and security, suffice it to recall that, although our poor countries may be struggling to integrate themselves into the global economy, it is clear that we have managed to break with the past. Africans are determined to secure the ways and means necessary to realize their destiny in the context of the African Union and NEPAD, which are designed to allow Africa to assume what has always been its due role in the concert of continents.

Mr. Nteturuye (Burundi) (*spoke in French*): My delegation is pleased to see that the General Assembly, over which you preside, Mr. President, has decided to hold this unique meeting on two inter-connected subjects so important to Africa. We would like to thank Secretary-General Kofi Annan for the quality of his reports, which allow us both to take stock of the progress made in the political stabilization and development of our continent and to look to the future.

We welcome the establishment of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, and we ask that the

necessary resources be given to the Office in order that it may properly carry out its mission.

With regard to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the determination to succeed in our common challenge is reflected in the speedy establishment of mechanisms to develop and coordinate regional development projects. In fact, the NEPAD secretariat has already begun to work; the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee is functioning and subscription to the Memorandum of Understanding on the African Peer Review Mechanism, which already has 15 signatories, is continuing. Sectoral progress has already been made, in cooperation with the competent agencies of the United Nations system.

Burundi has adopted its development programme as part of the interim strategic framework for economic recovery and poverty reduction. That programme is, to a great degree, based on NEPAD.

It is clear that Africa's desire to own its development strategy should be strengthened through new and reinvigorated relationships between Africa and its partners. Doing so is urgent and essential, given the very worrying trends we see today: a growth rate that has dropped from 4.3 per cent in 2001 to 3.2 per cent in 2002; the fact that HIV infection and AIDS now affect over 29.4 million people; and the very high percentage of people living in absolute poverty.

Africa cannot resolve its problems alone. It needs various forms of assistance from the international community, particularly through two types of action. First, the international community is urged to increase the level of official development assistance to African countries. In that regard, we welcome the rising trend we have observed in the past two years. That trend is in keeping with the initiatives announced in Monterrey and with the African Action Plan, adopted by the G-8 Summit held in Kananaskis, which was reaffirmed at Evian. That momentum must be continued in order to reach the United Nations goal of devoting 0.7 per cent of gross domestic product to official development assistance. In order to be effective, assistance must be tailored to the development strategies designed by recipient countries. Appropriate arrangements should also be found to complement the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative by either cancelling or alleviating debt burdens.

Secondly, we would like to emphasize the driving role of trade in development. Africa's role in international trade remains marginal, despite the wealth of its potential. The price of commodities, which is our main source of income, is constantly in a state of collapse, plunging millions of people into abject poverty. We are therefore concerned about agricultural subsidies in rich countries, which have a major negative impact on the lives of our rural populations. We wish to say that efforts to open up the markets of the North to commodities from the South should be continued.

With regard to the second item, which pertains to the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of sustainable development in Africa (A/58/352), my delegation associates itself with the assessment of the Secretary-General himself, who says that "progress has been slow and uneven". That should not discourage us, however; quite to the contrary, we need to redouble our efforts and be more imaginative to, among other things, resolve conflicts in our countries and create conditions for development.

We are pleased to note that the new African Union is now preparing to launch new initiatives for peace and development in Africa. However, in order to truly achieve the goal of bringing peace and stabilization to African countries in conflict, the African Union must organize itself to meet the challenges of genocide, poverty, the proliferation of light weapons, AIDS and poor governance. Early warning mechanisms must detect emerging signs of conflict in a timely manner, and preventive action should be taken swiftly. Once a conflict has broken out, it can only be resolved if political actions are accompanied by economic and humanitarian support for people who, generally speaking, live in untenable conditions during wartime. That aspect is sometimes forgotten, as donors make their assistance contingent on the restoration of security in a country, plunging us quickly into a vicious circle.

At least as far as Burundi is concerned, experience has shown that once a peace agreement or a ceasefire is concluded, unless a ceasefire monitoring or peacekeeping mission is quickly deployed, the situation can get worse and there is a risk that an all-out war will break out. Africa does not have the resources for that. Yet, the Security Council encourages Africans to resolve African conflicts themselves. Why do rich

countries take their time in providing financial and logistical resources to African countries that are making an effort to deploy their troops? For example, an African force has been deployed in Burundi for months, but it is not fully functioning due to a lack of necessary resources. Yet, with the signing in Pretoria in 2003 of the comprehensive Pretoria Protocol on Political, Defence and Security Power Sharing in Burundi between the Transitional Government and the main rebel movement in Burundi, there is an increasingly urgent need to prevent any resumption of war, which would cancel out all the efforts made by Burundi, the facilitator and the subregion.

My delegation notes that international conditions sometimes impede our momentum towards political and economic modernization in the continent. Dialogue must therefore continue on the basis of partnership between African countries themselves and between African countries and the rest of the international community, including such regional organizations as the African Union and NEPAD.

Mr. Sow (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, I should like to express to you my delegation's satisfaction at the perfect organization of this high-level debate, which enables us to assess progress in implementing the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and international support for it. To the Secretary-General, my delegation once again expresses its gratitude for the very useful information and relevant recommendations contained in his report (A/58/254). We commend him for his efforts within the international community to attain the objectives contained in NEPAD's programmes.

The excellent report under consideration is the Secretary-General's first comprehensive report on the implementation of resolution 57/7, by which the General Assembly requested the international community and the United Nations system to organize their support for African countries in conformity with the principles, objectives and priorities of NEPAD. The report has the great merit of shedding light on both progress made and obstacles encountered, and it offers for our consideration a series of proposals aimed at supporting the process of implementing NEPAD and strengthening the support provided to it by many development partners.

My delegation notes with satisfaction the resolve and awareness shown by African leaders in

implementing the provisions contained in NEPAD's programmes, particularly by integrating NEPAD's priorities into their respective countries' development policies and planning frameworks and by mobilizing national resources to that end. As we see it, NEPAD offers to African countries and their development partners the opportunity to re-launch Africa's development initiatives on the basis of commonly agreed objectives and mutual responsibilities.

As the priority establishment of the African Peer Review Mechanism illustrates, NEPAD reflects African leaders' determination to shoulder responsibility for the development of their countries, in partnership with the international community. By committing themselves — with the international community's support — to ensuring peace, security, sound economic management and good governance in Africa, our African leaders are seeking to place NEPAD on a long-lasting and credible foundation. My delegation believes that development and peace are two inseparable elements. Consequently, any development activity must be accompanied by peace-building efforts. That is why we welcome African countries' commitment to peace, security and good management of their economies. The African continent seems to be on the right path for the swift realization of NEPAD's promises.

The report rightly stressed the importance of world partnership, including South-South cooperation, triangular cooperation and the decisive contribution that they can make to NEPAD's implementation. Nevertheless, we remain concerned that, despite the efforts of our partners and of Africans themselves, attainment of the Millennium Development Goals seems out of reach for most regions of the continent.

To achieve sustained and durable economic growth, we must attach greater importance to poverty reduction, human-based development, fighting the spread of HIV/AIDS and reducing dependence on imported foodstuffs. To help Africa reverse the current trend, development partners must continue to play a significant role in critical sectors by, inter alia, increasing official development assistance, creating a more open and more equitable trade system, relieving or cancelling debt and reducing agricultural subsidies.

In that context, it is important to stress the United Nations system's praiseworthy record in creating an operational framework for NEPAD at the national, regional and world levels. We particularly welcome the

lead role played in Africa by the Economic Commission for Africa, alongside the African Union and the African Development Bank. Undoubtedly, the creation on 1 May 2003 of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, charged with coordinating NEPAD at United Nations Headquarters, will enable us to strengthen and build on international momentum for development, peace and security in Africa.

In conclusion, my delegation expresses its appreciation to the international community for the solidarity and partnership that it continues to demonstrate in making NEPAD a reality. We pay tribute to the Secretary-General for the resolute efforts of the Secretary-General and the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa with a view to strengthening coordination among the various components of the international system so as to mobilize the support necessary for NEPAD's effective implementation.

Mr. Pemagbi (Sierra Leone): Mr. President, the delegation of the Republic of Sierra Leone wishes to express its profound appreciation to your Bureau for devoting this day to a comprehensive debate on progress in the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). We also extend a warm hand of gratitude to the Secretary-General and the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa for the two lucid reports that have guided our participation in the debate.

NEPAD occupies a special place of pride in Africa's development and peace efforts, because it is the product of a shared vision of the continent's leaders that is built on their genuine desire to conquer the persistent miseries of underdevelopment and conflict, their concomitant frustrating dependence and other indignities. It is a challenge to Africa, set by Africa, owned by Africa and pursued by Africa. But it is also a challenge to the rest of the world to demonstrate understanding, solidarity and partnership with a continent that has very little to show for its immense natural resources. Moreover, it is a challenge to the rapidly expanding phenomenon of globalization to ensure that no part of the globe remains tethered to poverty and other disadvantages that deny it the enjoyment of the universally accepted basic necessities of life.

To the people of Sierra Leone, who suffered for 11 years in the devastating grip of one of the most brutal armed conflicts in the history of mankind but

stood firm for their human and democratic rights, NEPAD connotes freedom; liberation from conflict and hunger; good health; stability; an end to abuse and to the violation of rights; peace and security; sound, democratic, transparent and accountable governance; and accelerated development. Thus, to us, the NEPAD programme is a blueprint for salvation, as it is to many other Africans. Certainly, hopes and expectations are high, almost bordering on utopia.

My delegation is delighted that, in spite of its numerous growing pains and constraints, NEPAD has scored impressive achievements within its short period of existence. We salute our African leaders and their partners as well as all others that have contributed to this success.

Sierra Leone has a national recovery programme designed to address the issues that engendered the conflict, as well as to serve as the foundation for national development. This recovery programme and its regional dimensions are in consonance with the objectives of NEPAD. Thus, even though we have yet fully to recover from the nightmare of a violent conflict, we are resolved to fulfil our commitment to NEPAD.

We note, and have great expectations of, the African Union's establishment of a Peace and Security Council to deal with issues of conflict and maintenance of peace on the continent. We propose, as early as now, for priority consideration of the Council when operational, a collective regional approach with a mechanism that is permanently ready speedily to respond to conflicts — even to signs of conflicts. This can reduce the human and material costs of conflicts. We further suggest the establishment of a permanent, rather than ad hoc, partnership with the United Nations, for the eradication of conflict from the continent.

We applaud NEPAD for its achievements and plans for the provision of social services and infrastructure. We would, however, like to point out one area that we think deserves more attention than was accorded it in the report — that is, tertiary education, especially at the university level, which produces the upper-level manpower for engineering our development. It is common knowledge that Africa is suffering a brain drain that is negatively affecting its development efforts. A substantial number of the best minds and professionals have left the continent in search of greener pastures. It is hard to imagine how

serious that problem is for war-ravaged countries such as Sierra Leone and Liberia. My delegation suggests that a special programme to motivate Africa's professionals to return home to build or rebuild their continent be cooperatively designed and pursued by national Governments and NEPAD.

My delegation is totally convinced that the resolution of any conflict can be accomplished only through a comprehensive programme that addresses the root causes of such conflict. This is the most concrete guarantee against the possibility of the country's sliding back into conflict. We urge NEPAD to make this issue a priority component of its peace programme. Also, it is undeniable that the most worrying challenge for any country emerging from conflict is how to manage its newly acquired treasure of peace, in addition to directly addressing the issues that generated the conflict.

We do not yet have an answer to that problem. Rather, we propose that NEPAD and its partners give the quest for an answer to that question a prominent place on the peace agenda for Africa. As a shining example of a United Nations peacekeeping success and a model of the determination of a people to achieve peace when the odds are stacked against them, Sierra Leone — it is hoped — will have an opportunity to report its experience to this world body on this matter in the near future.

There is no shortage of problems related to small arms and light weapons, particularly in the West African subregion. What we now need are the resources and the political will to resolve conflicts and carefully manage peace, thus ensuring that no market exists for small arms and light weapons in the region. We need also to cultivate in the region, through education and practice, a culture of peace that rejects the use of violence to settle disputes and differences — a culture that is based on the principles of participatory democracy, the rule of law, human rights and responsible governance.

It must be emphasized that there is no alternative to regional cooperation and support from the international community to build the capacity of poor African countries to cope with the deadly problem of small arms and light weapons. Consequently, we are appealing for technical and financial support from the international community to help us to meet our commitments.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that NEPAD is a noble venture for durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. In spite of numerous constraints, the programme is on course to achieve its goals. To sustain this momentum, we would like to appeal to our partners, both bilateral and multilateral, for more technical and financial support. With adequate support, Sierra Leone will never be found wanting in terms of its responsibility to implement the NEPAD programme.

Mr. Tekle (Eritrea): The Eritrean delegation takes this opportunity to extend its gratitude and thanks to the Secretary-General for the progress reports on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/58/352) and on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (A/58/254).

Since independence, numerous African States in almost all of the regions of the continent have been plagued by interminable internal conflicts and inter-State wars, whose number seems to be increasing, not decreasing. In spite of the end of the 30-year-long Eritrean war of liberation and of the equally long Angolan civil war, as well as of the civil wars in Mozambique and Sierra Leone, there are still a plethora of conflicts and wars in, inter alia, Somalia, the Sudan, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Eritrean-Ethiopian peace process, too, is being threatened with derailment.

Those wars have resulted in incalculable and widespread loss of life and destruction of property; they have created failed States and "soft" States ripe for destabilization; and they have ruined economies and, indeed, traditional, stable ways of life in many societies. They have created millions of refugees and displaced persons. They have caused disillusionment, despair and frustration — sentiments that are ready to be exploited by unscrupulous persons or groups.

Furthermore, the overwhelming majority of African States remain in the same extremely bad socio-economic situation as they were at the time of independence, in spite of the numerous economic and social experiments carried out, the strategies, declarations and programmes of action adopted and even the implementation of policies similar to those that have been successful in other regions.

It is heartening to note that the international community has undertaken peacemaking efforts at the

international and regional levels more actively than ever before. In this connection, due recognition must be given to the United Nations for the creation of the Security Council's Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa and for the establishment of the Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Advisory Group on African Countries Emerging from Conflict. The concern for and commitment to African causes by individual or groups of developed States is also encouraging.

It is obvious that active and meaningful international assistance is needed if the continent is to liberate itself from a cycle of despair and embark on a course of development. Yet it is equally important to note that peace and development, which are inextricably linked, can be and must be promoted, protected and sustained essentially by Africans themselves. To that end, it will be necessary for us to reflect on the African condition deeply, to reassess ourselves more critically and to formulate more credible and meaningful strategies and policies.

What are the problems, and what must be done? The statistics are dismal. The World Bank's World Development Report 2003 clearly indicates that the average gross domestic product per capita in real purchasing power terms is lower during the third millennium than at the time of independence. It is only in Africa that poverty is on the rise; that almost 50 per cent of the population in sub-Saharan Africa still lives on one dollar per day; that about 140 million African young people are illiterate; and that the number of school-age children who are out of school is increasing. In addition, health services not only are dismal but are unavailable to the overwhelming majority of Africans.

It is imperative to recognize the interdependence between peace and development in any attempt to discern the root causes of conflict and in any search for durable peace and development. Thus, we must identify the lowest common denominators of political instability in any African State beleaguered by civil strife or at war with its neighbours.

It has been claimed by some Western academic circles and policy makers that the nature of the African State, which is different from the Western model, is the primary cause of conflict, instability and underdevelopment. Neo-patrimonialist academics and their supporters in government have advanced the

fatalist view that the African State, which is not functionally separated from society and which thrives not so much on formal institutions as on informal patron-client relationships, tends to promote the privatization of the State, to protect the distribution of resources and Government funds on a preferential basis and create what is known in French as "la politique du ventre". Inevitably, this has led to chronic shortages of resources and chronic instability, which spawn cyclical disorder characterized by corruption, internal conflict and even war with neighbouring States. The State is thus criminalized by such instrumentalization of disorder.

Recent democratization and development programmes are dismissed as not serious, and are considered only as measures to placate the donor community and as having no chance of being implemented. Such fatalism can be dismissed easily. Without being supportive of the attendant ills of patrimonialism, it can be pointed out that it has been successfully employed to achieve development and stability by countries in other regions. Indeed, informal systems have actually been formed by African societies to protect their interests, including the lives of their inhabitants, in situations where the State was so weak that it could not stave off poverty — indeed, famine — and the other uncertainties of life. Thus, it is altogether possible to expect that such informal systems may be useful in promoting development.

A more constructive criticism relates to the social chasm that divides development planners from the people — the would-be beneficiaries of development projects. Most development planning in Africa has hitherto been formulated from above, externally imposed by Governments or external actors with little knowledge of, or links with, the people, on the basis of administrative structures that ignore African realities, including cultural values. The overwhelming majority of the people have been excluded from the making of decisions which have a direct impact on their daily lives as well as on their future. The net result of such development planning from above and outside has been — in spite of the good intentions of the planners — poverty, hunger, disease, social disorder, conflict, displacement and forced immigration, and environmental degradation.

It is only recently that development based on participatory democracy and self-reliance, within the context of the cultural environment of any given

country, has been made popular. There is now near-unanimous consensus in the African intellectual milieu that no external assistance, however useful, can be a substitute for self-reliance, and that only participatory democracy at all levels of society can foster an environment for clean, responsible, accountable and transparent government.

Obviously, in the era of globalization, it is not possible for societies, wherever they may be located, to live in isolation, and they must therefore be prepared to live with the attendant consequences of the global village. On the other hand, they must be able to formulate strategies and policies which would allow the harmonious interplay of external influence and local cultural features.

Africa is now waging what is popularly known as the second liberation struggle, whose principles and objectives aim at reversing the frightening process which is threatening national integration. Those objectives include the broadening and deepening of the relations between centre and periphery and improving the social fabric of our societies, the health of our peoples and the relations between States. The struggle is predicated on harmonious and cooperative relations among States based on the principles of coexistence and respect for the rule of law. That is the Eritrean understanding of the African renaissance.

It is in this context that we recognize the relevance of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). At the beginning of the new millennium, Africa seems to be determined to open a new chapter in its history and to credibly address the numerous challenges it is facing. The renewed determination of its leaders to kick-start inter-African cooperation and to establish a meaningful relationship with the international community is a commendable commitment of historic significance. The African Union seems to possess the structural attributes that the Organization of African Unity lacked to address conflict and development issues effectively. The international community seems to have received the Union well. All of this augurs well for NEPAD.

NEPAD differs from previous African initiatives — including, *inter alia*, the Lagos Plan of Action — if only because it is a holistic, comprehensive and strategic socio-economic plan which identifies and prioritizes critical political, cultural, social and economic issues. It also provides

for the creation of essential organs to ensure timely implementation of programmes to achieve its goals.

However, NEPAD is not without its flaws. Among the major sources of concern and criticism from African academics and members of civil society are that African Governments will not commit themselves to the management of their respective States with the requisite good governance, and the rooting out of corruption, needed for the success of NEPAD; that African Governments will not uncritically accept globalization and readily integrate their economies into the international system; that most African Governments have already questioned the viability and applicability of the African Peer Review Mechanism; that many African members of civil society question the correctness of the idea of receiving from potential donors the \$64 billion purportedly needed to activate NEPAD, as it would establish a dependency relationship that would in fact lead to the further weakening of African economies and the curtailment of their independence and sovereignty; that NEPAD is considered "undemocratic", as it did not benefit from consultation with members of African civil society, including, *inter alia*, community-based organizations, academics and other professional groups; that NEPAD is considered contradictory because, in fact, it focuses on aid while its rhetoric decries African dependence on aid and emphasizes trade and investment as the real solutions to Africa's economic woes; and that many in Africa are sceptical that developed countries will translate pledges of assistance into concrete action.

There is no question that the African Union, which is now empowered to ensure full African ownership of the NEPAD initiative, will be able to successfully achieve all of the Partnership's political, economic, social and environmental goals with the further refinement and clarification of strategies and programmes to allay fears and to eliminate concerns.

Mr. Kasri (Indonesia): We would like to thank the Secretary-General for his thorough report (A/58/254) on progress in the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) with support from the international community, including the United Nations system. Despite many difficulties, which the report highlights, it is clear that the momentum for Africa's development is increasing.

Although some believe that Africa poses the greatest development challenge for the twenty-first century, its leaders have clearly demonstrated faith in their own ability to overcome the many hurdles to the development of their nations. They have come up with a credible and workable plan to bring about a positive transformation in the still-difficult circumstances affecting the continent.

We are pleased to learn from the report that civil society and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have contributed constructively to NEPAD's implementation. Such support is important, because Africa needs all the help it can get from all relevant stakeholders at all levels to implement NEPAD.

Perhaps one of the most serious obstacles to the full implementation of NEPAD is the persistent civil strife and conflict that exist in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa. Development can occur only in peaceful conditions, because conflict depletes Africa's valuable human and financial resources and destroys infrastructure. It is therefore encouraging to learn of the development of a plan of action to enhance Africa's capability for conflict prevention and the promotion of peace. Note has also been taken of the African Union's establishment of a Peace and Security Council to ensure that peace prevails in order to allow for the continent's development.

In addition to peace, there is also a need for funding. Yet, despite the fact that they are severely constrained by unfavourable economic and financial circumstances, African countries are nevertheless determined to retain ownership and leadership of NEPAD by providing its core funding. However, that does not mean that the financial problems of African development have been adequately addressed. On the contrary, funding from donor countries remains a critical factor in the successful implementation of NEPAD. In providing such support, it is important that donors respond to development priorities set by African countries themselves. The deep involvement of African leaders in the continent's development process makes them fully knowledgeable about which areas require urgent attention in order that NEPAD may produce the results they desire. In providing the necessary assistance, it is crucial that donors align their aid programmes with respective national strategies.

It is indeed heartening to learn from the report that a number of African countries have benefited from

acts of debt relief, debt forgiveness and outright debt cancellation as indirect forms of funding. It is equally heartening to learn that official development assistance to Africa is increasing, consistent with commitments made at Monterrey. However, with the present levels of assistance, the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals will be beyond the reach of most African countries. The solution is obvious. Given the enormity of Africa's needs, official development assistance must increase substantially. Donor countries must honour the commitments they made at the various international conferences and summits to promote global development, because funding will accelerate implementation of NEPAD and make the Millennium Development Goals practical targets for African countries.

It is therefore imperative that donors respond to the appeal for \$22 billion annually to enable African countries to reach internationally agreed health targets. Although African countries have committed themselves to increasing their health budgets by 15 per cent, those increases are unlikely to fully satisfy their needs for funding in the health sector. By extension, that means that programmes aimed at controlling and eliminating HIV/AIDS in Africa must continue to be supported financially by donor countries.

I would also like to emphasize that greater international cooperation is needed in order to accelerate the implementation of NEPAD. In that connection, the efforts and initiatives of the international community should be encouraged, as they provide meaningful support for African development. In that respect, and in the spirit of the Bandung Asian-African Conference of 1955, Indonesia, together with South Africa, co-chaired the first Asian-African Subregional Organizations Conference in Bandung, Indonesia, on 29 and 30 July 2003. The Conference not only endorsed NEPAD, but also laid the foundation for wide-ranging cooperation between Asia and Africa.

In its effort to establish links between the two continents, the Conference emphasized both the collective responsibilities and the important role of subregional organizations in exploring and implementing concrete steps to propel growth and development in both regions. The Conference discussed areas of cooperation and issues of strategic importance to both regions that will become key elements of a new strategic partnership.

The second Conference, scheduled to be held in South Africa next year, will further develop a programme of work with specific time frames, modalities, operational approaches and formats for cooperation to ensure the realization of the new strategic partnership. The partnership is expected to be launched in 2005 during the Asian-African summit in conjunction with the commemoration of the golden jubilee of the Bandung Asian-African Conference.

In conclusion, Indonesia is encouraged by the progress of the implementation of NEPAD. While recognizing the many constraints affecting the efforts of African countries, the international community should continue to support and assist African countries to enable them to push forward with their continental vision. In this regard, Indonesia stands in full solidarity with our brotherly African countries.

Mr. Berry (Canada) (*spoke in French*): I am pleased to reaffirm Canada's strong commitment to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). NEPAD recognizes that peace, security, democracy, good governance, respect for human rights and sound economic management are preconditions for sustainable development in Africa. The integrated, credible and comprehensive programme of action set forth in NEPAD represents the best opportunity the people of Africa are likely to have to improve their quality of life and to respond to the challenges confronting their continent. All Member States and almost every part of the United Nations system have a role to play in ensuring that NEPAD succeeds.

In September of last year, during the Assembly's high-level debate on NEPAD (see A/57/PV.10), Prime Minister Chrétien emphasized that the time for talk had passed and that now there must be action.

Canada is delivering on its commitments in support of NEPAD, including those set out in the Group of Eight (G-8) Africa Action Plan adopted in Canada in 2002. In January of this year, for example, we opened our markets, quota- and tariff-free, to almost all imports from the least developed countries. The transparent rules-of-origin provisions we introduced, in addition to our trade-related capacity-building initiatives, will allow African countries other than the 34 least developed countries in Africa to also benefit from this increased market access.

The February 2003 federal budget increased Canada's international assistance by 8 per cent

annually through 2004-2005, half or more of which will be earmarked for Africa. That is in keeping with our commitment made at Monterrey to double our international assistance by the end of the decade. This will amount to \$6 billion in international assistance for Africa in new and existing resources in the five-year period following the 2002 G-8 Summit.

We have also begun to change the manner in which we allot official development assistance. We included African partners, in particular the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, in the peer review of Canada undertaken last year by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee. We are also untying our aid.

(*spoke in English*)

We are set to double Canadian support for basic education in Africa to \$100 million per year. Through the \$500 million Canada Fund for Africa, set up in support of NEPAD, we are making major contributions towards polio eradication, AIDS vaccine research, digital opportunities, institutional capacity-building, agricultural research and development, capacity for peace support in Africa and much, much more. For instance, we are launching a Canada Investment Fund for Africa with \$100 million in Government funding, to be matched by the private sector, for the purpose of encouraging private sector engagement in Africa. We are also providing support to the African Development Bank to improve the capacity of African countries to prepare projects and tap into unused sources of financial support for the development of infrastructure initiatives.

Canada welcomes the World Trade Organization's (WTO) historic decision on the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights and public health. As members know, we are taking steps to implement that decision domestically. We are well aware that Canada's leading initiative will be watched carefully by the international community. We realize it is important for us to do this correctly, in a manner that ensures consistency with both the spirit and the purpose of the WTO decision of 30 August.

At the G-8 Summit in France in June 2003, G-8 leaders renewed their commitment to their Africa Action Plan and undertook to review progress in its implementation no later than their 2005 Summit in the United Kingdom. We will continue to work closely

with our G-8 partners, and we look forward to the expansion of the G-8's partnership with African countries in support of NEPAD to include other major partners of Africa and key international institutions.

NEPAD is beginning to have an impact, to the benefit of the peoples of Africa. The success of African partners in their bold attempt to launch an African Peer Review Mechanism gives expression to this. The African Peer Review Mechanism and the identification, through it, of best practices relating to governance, stand to be of enormous symbolic and practical value in attaining NEPAD's objective of establishing the conditions necessary for development, including through increased investment and trade.

The persistent failure of some African Governments to respect the principles contained in NEPAD and to govern in the interest of their people must not blind us to the success that is being achieved elsewhere on the continent. For example, in Kenya the new Government has moved quickly to implement the concepts contained in NEPAD by expanding access to education and by rooting out corruption. Democracy is on the ascendant in Africa, and NEPAD has an important part to play.

Today's debate speaks to the remarkable success that NEPAD has had in ensuring that crises elsewhere do not divert the world's attention away from Africa's potential and its needs. We must all continue to build on that initial success.

Mr. Chidyausiku (Zimbabwe): Let me begin by thanking the Secretariat for its report on the sub-item entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD): progress in implementation and international support: causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa" (A/58/352), which was submitted in compliance with resolution 57/296. My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the Chairman of the African Union.

In his opening statement in the general debate of the Second Committee on 6 October, Mr. José Ocampo, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, indicated that the world economic recovery was gaining traction and that the recovery was expected to solidify and broaden in 2004. Mr. Ocampo also indicated that, in spite of that improvement, global economic growth had slipped since the Millennium Declaration was adopted, with developing countries

bearing the brunt of the slowdown. If this trend continues, only a few African countries will meet the Millennium Development Goals.

It is against that background that I wish to draw the attention of the Assembly to some issues related to this agenda item that are of concern to my delegation and affect its work. Given the depressing economic growth rates, the staggering figure of 30 million people living with HIV/AIDS, the 380 million people living in absolute poverty and the fact that armed conflict in several countries is reversing positive trends in human development, there is an urgent need to completely overhaul the development paradigm in Africa so as to meet the challenges of implementing the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

Reversing those trends will require a new, energized relationship between Africa and its partners, based on trust and a shared responsibility for development effectiveness. My Government underscores the importance of African ownership of the continent's development strategies as a means of underpinning the transformed partnerships that we seek with our development partners. This will involve developing home-grown policies and programmes for poverty reduction, improving our governance systems and resolving conflicts on the continent.

If the challenges of Africa are to be met, developed countries also need to do a great deal more on aid, trade and debt relief. My delegation calls on our partners to continue to focus on increasing the quantity and improving the quality of aid, as well as on enhancing policy coherence, both of which are considered central to upholding our partners' side of mutual accountability.

There has been some progress in making official development assistance more effective. We welcome the progress made in various forums, including through the Monterrey Consensus and official development assistance commitments by members of the Group of Eight and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. In spite of those commitments, official development assistance flows to Africa are still too low and the principle of African ownership is often compromised by conditionalities.

We also welcome efforts by our partners to align their aid programmes with country-led national development strategies. My delegation applauds Japan for linking the Tokyo International Conference on

African Development to support for Africa's strategy for development — NEPAD. However, the slow pace at which some of our partners are aligning their aid modalities is undermining our national systems and processes for development. Predictability and the timely disbursement of support remain elusive, creating difficulties for our countries in designing and implementing key policies. My delegation welcomes the proposed establishment of the international finance facility, designed to mobilize additional resources to help the poorest countries to meet the Millennium Development Goals. We would welcome its innovations, among them attempts to address the issue of predictability, an emphasis on the untying of aid and a focus on low-income countries.

In the area of trade, the aid given by developed countries is often undercut by their trade policies. We call on our partners to ensure that policies having an impact on African development, including those relating to official development assistance, trade, market access and agriculture, are consistent with the Millennium Development Goals. My delegation welcomes France's proposal to remove subsidies on agricultural products as a step towards greater market access for African products.

With regard to the African debt crisis, the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt (HIPC) Initiative has brought debt relief to a number of African countries. The HIPC Initiative, however, is not delivering long-term debt sustainability as expected, and African countries remain overburdened by external debt. Developing countries should rethink their strategies for resolving the debt crisis. There are many facets of the debt crisis, but the fundamental weakness is that the creditors continue to dominate the decision-making process with regard to the resolution of the debt crisis. Debt-relief initiatives have been designed by donors to safeguard their interests. There is a need for arbitration on specific types of loans or debt, in particular odious and illegitimate debt. There are debts that African countries ought not to pay because their people never benefited from the loans. These include debts incurred by illegitimate debtors, loans misused because of corruption, debts incurred as a result of illegitimate loans for projects that did not benefit the people as intended, and debts incurred through wrong policy advice, such as adjustment policies, or as a result of external factors over which the debtors have no control. The list should include debts in connection

with which money was actually stolen and banked in the North.

Conflict and development are incompatible. African countries must work together and use the mechanisms within NEPAD to prevent and resolve armed conflict and bring political stability to Africa. We welcome the steps towards peace in Liberia, the Sudan, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone. Recent events in Côte d'Ivoire are cause for concern, and amply demonstrate that the consolidation of peace is important in preventing the recurrence of conflict and constitutes an initial step towards development.

There has been a notable improvement in peace and security in some parts of Africa due to the efforts of Africa leaders themselves, supported by the international community. African countries should consolidate peace and put an end to remaining conflicts on the continent so that States can devote all their capacities and resources to economic growth and sustainable development. Conflict remains a serious obstacle to development because it wastes vital resources and has long-term consequences, such as refugees, internally displaced persons, landmines and the proliferation of small arms, which often exacerbate conflict.

In conclusion, my delegation agrees with the Secretary-General's report that, while progress has been made in some areas, in general it has been very slow and uneven. Although there should be African ownership of the African development process, international partnership also has an important role to play in extending comprehensive and integrated assistance to African countries. African development can be achieved only by the concerted efforts of Africa and its development partners.

Mr. Zhang Yishan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation wishes to express its thanks and appreciation to the Secretary-General for his reports on the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (A/58/254) and on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/58/352).

NEPAD is a major initiative by the African countries to empower themselves by joining forces with a view to achieving development. It is an expression of their determination, courage and

pioneering spirit in taking their destiny into their own hands. In the year under review, Africa has made good progress in the implementation of NEPAD. In July 2003, in an effort to ensure the implementation of NEPAD, the African Union held a summit meeting, which adopted a Declaration on the New Partnership. Moreover, African countries have set up national focal points, implemented regional measures and achieved welcome results in areas such as agriculture, health care, education, environment and infrastructure. We believe that through these efforts, African countries will make historic headway in their path to development and reconstruction.

African development requires the active support and assistance of the international community in implementing the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). African countries face myriad challenges in the areas of resources, debt relief, trade and investment. The Secretary-General's report points out that official development assistance to Africa declined throughout the 1990s, falling from \$26.6 billion in 1990 to \$16.4 billion in 2000. In the past two years, there has been a rebound, but the amount still fell short of the 1990s level. Moreover, the linkage of official development assistance is on the increase, with procedures becoming increasingly cumbersome.

There has been limited focus in areas of trade and lack of progress in key areas of importance and interest to Africa, such as market access and agriculture subsidies. Trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights and public health are hurting the development of African countries. Investment prospects do not offer grounds for optimism. Therefore, I wish to underscore the following points concerning the future support of the international community for African development.

First, Africa's ownership and leadership of NEPAD must be respected. Externally imposed conditions do not offer genuine solutions to African problems. In many instances, liberalization, privatization, market reform and other readjustment programmes not only do not promote African economic growth, but, to the contrary, they create serious social problems. Therefore, the international community should fully acquaint itself with the real circumstances of African countries, respect their sovereign choices and development strategies and support the efforts of the African continent.

Secondly, the commitments made to Africa in the Millennium Declaration, the Monterrey Consensus and the World Summit for Sustainable Development Plan of Action must be translated into reality. The international community must genuinely deliver on commitments in the areas of debt, trade, official development assistance and the transfer of technology. African development also requires a fair and equitable international economic environment that is conducive to enhancing Africa's capacity for self-sustaining development.

Thirdly, the prevention and the resolution of conflicts are important guarantees for the development of Africa. Over the past year, positive progress has been made in seeking settlements in countries such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Liberia. However, uncertainties remain in some countries and regions. Bringing about comprehensive peace and stability in Africa will be an arduous and long-term task. It is the shared responsibility and the obligation of all members of the international community to help African countries realize national reconciliation.

The United Nations should play a bigger role in Africa in the areas of conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction and peace. Our Organization should strengthen its coordination and cooperation with African, regional and subregional organizations. We call on national Governments to attach greater importance to Africa, support African countries in peace-seeking efforts, increase assistance to enhance the peace process and give priority to capacity-building in African countries.

The consolidation and the development of friendly relations with the African people and the provision of support and assistance to African States for their economic and social development constitute a main focus of China's foreign policy. China has established the China-Africa Cooperation Forum to carry out extensive and in-depth exchanges and cooperation with African countries.

The Chinese Government has already signed debt-cancellation protocols with 31 African countries totalling \$1.05 billion, which accounts for about 60 per cent of the matured debts of those countries. From 15 to 16 December 2003, the second ministerial meeting of the Forum will be held in Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia. This marks the first Forum meeting to be

held on the African continent. The Chinese Government will send a high-level delegation. This meeting will review the implementation of two important programmes — the Beijing Declaration and the China-Africa Economic and Social Development Programme.

On the basis of the Forum's experience of the past three years, delegations will discuss ways and means of enhancing cooperation in areas of human resources, agriculture, infrastructure and investment. The China-Africa Entrepreneur Forum and the China-Africa Friendship Exhibition will be featured at the ministerial meeting.

I wish to conclude by emphasizing that the Chinese Government is ready to continue supporting African development and the implementation of NEPAD through the China-Africa Cooperation Forum and other cooperation channels.

Mr. Alexandre (Haiti) (*spoke in French*): Allow me, at the outset, on behalf of the Haitian delegation, to warmly congratulate Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his outstanding work on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

Resolution 57/7 is particularly important to Haiti because it attests to the determination of the peoples of Africa, supported by the international community, to fight poverty and to work to develop the African continent. This part of the world has long endured for the heavy blows of history, nature's whims and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Of 1.3 billion people around the world living below the poverty line, 350 million are in Africa. High debt and structural problems of all kinds severely handicap the social economic development of the continent.

That is why we must stay the course, guided by the Millennium Declaration and the goals set at Doha, Monterrey and Johannesburg. We must join our efforts to free men, women and children from extreme poverty that strips them of their humanity. It is our responsibility to continue to work to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor countries and to ensure that globalization benefits all of humankind.

My delegation reiterates its unconditional support for NEPAD and reaffirms its solidarity and cooperation with the fraternal African peoples and Governments. This ambitious initiative, which redefines a partnership of responsibility and commitment, reflects Africa's

determination to take charge of its destiny. The challenge is great. Overcoming it requires, among other things, another form of trade relations with the developed countries and the honouring of commitments made by international partners. The failure at Cancún once again underscores the need to rethink global trade mechanisms.

This initiative by Africa for Africa continues to require the full support of the international community, particularly the donor countries. It represents an opportunity to break with tradition and for all our partners to coordinate their support, taking into account priorities of the Governments and peoples of that region, not by imposing conditions from the outside. My delegation believes that we should seize this historic opportunity to put an end to the suffering of the peoples of Africa, for there is no shortage of resources to do so. Ongoing responsible leadership on the part of Africa to work steadfastly towards lasting development on the continent will contribute to ensuring NEPAD's full success.

There is no doubt that, with all their energy and creativity and with the genuine support of their partners, the people of Africa aspire to improving their quality of life. My delegation believes that we should take advantage of that momentum to bring about a productive partnership to reduce the aforementioned gap between rich and poor in order to bring about development in the African continent.

As the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/58/254 points out, it is encouraging to note that, one year after the General Assembly adopted resolution 57/12, African countries have adopted various constructive initiatives with a view to integrating the priorities of the New Partnership for Africa's Development into their national policies and development planning frameworks, as well as to mobilize national resources to support that very important initiative. My delegation welcomes the commitment of African countries to peace, democracy and good governance, which are essential to achieving lasting development.

We welcome the resurgence in official development assistance to the African continent, which rose from \$16.38 billion in 2000 to \$18.62 billion in 2002. We also welcome the debt alleviation provided to 22 African countries, as well as the debt cancellation for certain countries of the region that have met the

conditions of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative.

The delegation of Haiti would like to conclude by expressing its appreciation for the support afforded by the United Nations system to NEPAD in line with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly.

Programme of work

The President: On Monday morning, 20 October 2003 the General Assembly will consider, as the first

item, a letter by the Chairman of the Committee on Conferences to be issued as document A/58/356/Add.1. This is an addition to the programme that was already announced in document A/INF/58/4/Rev.1.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.